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THE HEALER.

BY SUSIE M. BEST.

Time is the Healer—no wound is so deep
But when to his bosom you wearily creep,
He'll smooth from your brow the furrows of care,
And the balm of his peace lay tenderly there.

Time is the Healer—no grief is so drear
But when in his face you longingly peer,
He'll point to the Lethe that flows at his feet,
Bid you lave in its waters till rest is complete.

Time is the Healer—no soul is so sad
But when in his raiment you're carefully clad,
The woes of the Past will be as a dream,
And bright as the day star the Future will seem.

HER MAD REVENGE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "WITH THIS RING I WED THEE," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

A BEAUTIFUL room, warm, fragrant, luxurious, and furnished with all the quaintness and prettiness which the mixture of new and old furniture gives to the rooms of the present day, perfectly harmonious in its incongruity, and a fitting nest for the girl who was its only occupant on this fair day in early June, when the trees in the park were putting on their fair green, the London season was slowly approaching its height, before it declined again in the fierce heat of the July sun.

The room was one of the smaller rooms in a stately house overlooking the park, and it was the one the young mistress of the house had selected for her own, because it was the very simplest of all the beautiful apartments, and because it opened into a pretty little conservatory full of choice flowering and foliage plants.

She was leaning back in one of the low chairs, with her hands idly crossed upon her lap, and her lovely face and graceful figure added another charm to the pretty room; but as she rested there in the bright morning hours, looking so perfectly at her ease in her beautiful surroundings, there was a heavy shadow darkening the sombre, beautiful eyes, which was always there now.

One of the chief events of the London season had been the entrance into society of the girl who six months previously had inherited the vast wealth of the fashionable but eccentric Mrs. Hamilton, and who, besides this great fortune which was so entirely at her disposal, possessed great beauty and a strange charm of manner which singled her out for admiration, even where more beautiful women were present to eclipse her.

Mrs. Hamilton's disposal of her great wealth had surprised no one. She was known to be a lonely woman, without relatives and a passionate lover of beauty; she had been generous and charitable, but had never shown any disposition to let hospitals or charitable institutions benefit largely by any bequest of hers; and her husband's nephew had been too insignificant a personage to attract much notice in the great world to which her wealth had admitted her. Besides, her fortune was her own—not in any way derived from her marriage; and she was at liberty to leave it to whom she pleased.

And it had pleased her to leave it to Mabel Stanley.

There were not a few of the select and exclusive great people who make up what is called "Society" who had seen Miss Stanley during her long stay on the continent with Mrs. Hamilton, and these had all been charmed by her beauty and the curious charm of her gravity, which made her seem unlike all other girls of her age.

Thus her reputation had preceded her, and when the stately mansion in Park Lane was once more thrown open, these old acquaintances flocked to its long-closed portals, bringing others in their train.

Although Miss Stanley neither received nor visited much—her mourning being the generally credited excuse—she was very soon "the fashion."

She was so charming, so graceful, so uncommon, and, above all, so wealthy. And then there was a little spice of romance about her, inasmuch that, beyond that she was of good birth and family, no one knew much about her; but not even those whose beauty she eclipsed, and, therefore, whose jealousy she excited, could doubt that this new apparition in the firmament of London society was anything but a well-bred woman.

Her manner was perfect; a little reserved and cold perhaps, but graceful, easy, high-bred. She seemed to receive all the adoration which fell to her lot with perfect indifference; perhaps this coldness added to her charm, for the men who followed her with their assiduities were in many cases men who were themselves greatly sought after, and unused to this pretty, careless kind of disdain.

But there was no disdain, no carelessness in her eyes as she sat alone in the fragrant solitude of her pretty room, her hands linked loosely together, her dark eyes fixed thoughtfully on a portrait which hung over the tall, inlaid mantel-piece, the only picture the room contained.

It was a portrait of her sister, painted from a photograph by one of the best foreign artists, and Bell's most precious possession. It would have been valuable to anyone—intrinsically valuable as a work of art, and valuable as a thing of beauty—but it had a greater value still for Bell from the excellence of the likeness.

It represented her sister in all the glory of that unusual and exquisite beauty that had bloomed but to fade, the beauty which had struck Mabel with such fresh power when she had returned home from school on that bright July day two years ago, the day which had begun so happily and ended so terribly.

The sadness, which was always latent in the girl's sweet eyes, grew and deepened in intensity as she looked. The desire to avenge her sister's terribly sudden death was now, as it had been during the last two years, the ruling motive of her life, so far too the scheme had been pre-eminently successful.

As we have seen, Mrs. Hamilton had made her rich, overlooking the claims of her husband's adopted son, but Bell was not satisfied. The destruction of whatever hopes he might have conceived about his aunt's wealth would, of course, be a disappointment, but it was not one which would destroy his life and ruin his happiness, as Pauline's life was destroyed and her happiness ruined.

Until she had succeeded in making him suffer as her sister had suffered, Bell would not be satisfied. And as she sat there looking at her sister's pictured face, she saw not only its loveliness, but the successful end of her plan of revenge.

The opening of the door made her remove her gaze and slightly turn her head; her mournful eyes brightened into a kindly, friendly smile at sight of Mrs. Fane, who had entered and advanced towards her.

A great and noticeable change had taken place in Mrs. Fane during the six months which had elapsed since Mrs. Hamilton died. She looked much older, her hair had grown very grey, her manner, always respectful, had become slightly nervous; the refinement of her appearance, always remarkable in one of her station, was strongly accentuated by the delicacy of her features the hollow orbits about her eyes.

"You sent for me, Miss Bell?" she said gently, her eyes meeting her young mistress's with a deep tenderness in their gaze, a tenderness mingled with sorrow.

"Yes, Dorcas; I have much to say to you this morning," Bell answered, her voice softening as it addressed her servant as it never softened when it addressed the courtiers and admirers who thronged the steps of the beautiful Miss Hamilton, for by Mrs. Hamilton's wish, her heiress had taken her name. "Sit down, old friend."

"Thank you, Miss Bell, I would rather stand," Dorcas answered quietly.

There was a moment's silence, during which Bell rose and stood, a slight, white figure, before the pretty, flower-filled hearth.

She, too, looked older than she had done six months ago. She was but twenty years of age, but she looked fully five years older; she looked far older, indeed, than her beautiful sister had done at twenty-five; and although she was less beautiful than Pauline, the singular and indefinable charm which she had always possessed clung to her still, intensified, indeed, by that little queenly air—haughty yet gracious—which had come to her since she had realised the power of her wealth and beauty.

"How is your patient, Dorcas?" she said, breaking the silence which had fallen between them, as silence often did fall when they were together, as if the hearts of both were too full of bitter, regretful thoughts to find ready utterance.

"She is much better, Miss Bell," Dorcas answered, a smile brightening her face; "much better. She is up this morning.,'

"I am so glad. Has she told you anything about herself?"

"There is very little to tell, my dear," Dorcas rejoined. "She is a governess, and poor, and almost friendless. The day she fainted in the street and you brought her home, she had not tasted food, and fainted from weakness."

Bell changed color. A look of pain came in her eyes.

"Oh, Dorcas!" she ejaculated, in a tone of horror. "Is it possible?"

"I am afraid she is not the only one, Miss Bell," the housekeeper answered sadly. "Many an educated lady is in as sad a plight. Miss Digby tells me she has been out of a situation for a long, long time, and had spent all her saving in keeping herself and in advertising. She was almost in despair. She is so grateful to you, my dear."

"Grateful for an act of the commonest humanity!" Bell said vehemently. "She need not be! Anyone else would have done the same. I am so glad I happened to be passing at the time."

"I am afraid everyone would not have done the same, Miss Bell," replied Dorcas gently. "In a great city like this one, people learn to care for themselves more than for anything else, and to distrust their neighbors."

"One could hardly distrust a poor, pretty child like that," Bell said almost indignantly.

"She is twenty-three, Miss Bell," Dorcas remarked, with a little smile.

Anxious and preoccupied as she was, she could not help smiling at Bell's pretty, protecting tone, as she spoke of a girl older than herself.

"So much? I will come and see her by-and-by, Dorcas. Doctor Whyte yesterday told me she was improving, and needed only care and nourishment to get quite strong, and she shall have those, shall she not?" Miss Hamilton remarked, somewhat absently, as if her thoughts had strayed from the subject.

Then, fixing her eyes on Mrs. Fane, with a curious, intent significance in her glance, she continued, in a low tone:

"Dorcas, I saw him last night."

A sudden, eager question sprang into the woman's sunken eyes.

"Geoffrey Hamilton?" she asked breathlessly.

"Yes," Bell answered laconically.

A long silence followed. Bell had turned her eyes upon the lovely pictured face over the mantel-piece; Mrs. Fane's eyes were fixed upon her face, trying to read the strange, inscrutable expression on its set, stern features, and trying vainly.

"He did not know you, Miss Bell?" she asked, in a low tone, almost timidly breaking the silence.

"Know me? As Mabel Stanley?" the girl said. "Oh, no! If he had known my real name I don't think it would have recalled anything to him. Two years is a long time, Dorcas, and Stanley is not an uncommon name. He knows me as Miss Hamilton, his aunt's heiress," she went on, with a little bitter laugh, "and I must say that under the circumstances, his manner was perfect: he greeted me with kind courtesy, just a little more cordially perhaps than he would have done an ordinary stranger, as if in delicate compliment to my friendship with his aunt, but without any apparent undercurrent of bitterness!"

"And you, Miss Bell?" asked Dorcas curiously.

"I?" Bell said quietly, but with a strong current of bitterness underlying her quiet tone. "I disguised my feelings very successfully, I think. He certainly did not guess that I felt inclined to shrink from him as from some unclean and wicked thing. I was perfectly civil, even cordial, Dorcas, while in my heart——"

Every shade of color had faded from her face in the intensity of feeling which had been aroused within her; an angry light burned in the beautiful eyes, which shone like stars in her beautiful face.

"If he could have seen into my heart at that moment," she went on passionately, "if he could have known how I felt towards him, he would have shrunk back from me in terror; I think he would have fled from my presence in affright. Dorcas, it seemed to me at that moment, that the brilliant, lighted drawing-room had faded suddenly from before me, and that I was again at the White House; that the summer dawn was breaking in the east; and that my darling was lying in my arms, cold and still, with the pale light upon her face!"

"Miss Bell! Miss Bell!"

"I wonder I did not betray myself, Dorcas," she continued, subduing her intense excitement with a strong effort. "I wonder I did not let him see how I despised and hated him! My self-control has astonished me ever since. For a moment I could scarcely speak to him; but I soon conquered that, and I am sure he never imagined that I held him in abhorrence, in horror!"

She put her hand up and covered her eyes with it for a moment. Dorcas Fane looked at her anxiously—curiosity, anger, sympathy all struggling together in her expression.

"All the time I was talking to him," the girl went on after a moment, beginning to walk slowly up and down the room, "that scene was before my eyes, Dorcas; that scene which I think I shall never forget, even if—which Heaven forbid!—I live to be an old woman. I could see her face rising up beside his, and her eyes softening into tenderness when she uttered his name; and I thought of their walks and talks in the Dingle Woods, and his treachery to her, and that letter which stabbed her to the heart! And I think"—she stopped suddenly in her walk and looked upward at

the pictured face with her eyes blazing with love, and anger, and sorrow—"if I had held a dagger in my hand then, I should have found strength and will to kill him, even as he had killed her!"

"Miss Bell, my dear, my dear," pleaded Mrs. Fane, herself startled and terrified at this fierce passion of grief and anger.

"But that would have been merciful, Dorcas," the girl continued, with a little bitter laugh. "A sudden, easy, painless death! That would be a far better fate than he deserves!—oh! far better! He must be made to suffer slow, lingering suffering and pain of mind—that pain which is so much harder to bear than pain of body. Dorcas"—in the intensity of her passion she caught the woman's arm in her hand, and held it so tightly with her slender fingers that she hurt her, although she bore the tight clasp without remonstrance—"do you not think with me that our cause is a just one? Punishment for sin must be allowable, otherwise would things have been made so easy for us? Think, old friend, how from the very first it was easy for us. We met Mrs. Hamilton by chance, without an effort on our part. She liked me, and when she knew the truth, she herself insisted on depriving her nephew of the fortune he was so eager to obtain although he was so unworthy. I think, even if she had not known of his treachery, Dorcas, she would have made me rich because she loved me so well. So that, without any effort on our part, we made him poor——"

"Without any effort!" the housekeeper said suddenly. "Oh! Miss Bell—think!"

She had spoken in a low tone, hardly above a whisper, but the words, simple as they were and spoken so softly, seemed to check the passionate current of Bell's words as effectually as if they had smitten her with sudden dumbness. The hot flush of anger, which had risen to her face, giving it back its old lovely coloring, faded into pallor; her dark eyes rested on Mrs. Fane's face with a strange expression of perplexity and sorrow dimming their bright, angry light.

There was a dead silence, which, following on the passionate current of words that had flowed from Bell's lips, resembled the calm which succeeds a storm.

"It was not wrong, Dorcas," Bell resumed after a few minutes, speaking in a low, unsteady voice; "the end justified the means—it was her wish, too. We were bound to carry out her wishes, however much we regretted the necessity. Oh, Dorcas, the very pain of doing it, the very misery of it, showed that it was our duty to obey her."

"Perhaps—but do not dwell upon it, my dear. It was successful," Mrs. Fane said with a shudder. "I think—oh, surely if it had been wrong, it would not have been so successful, but——"

Her voice failed her; she had grown very pale, even to her lips, and she was trembling so violently that she could scarcely stand. Very quietly, and trembling somewhat herself, Bell moved towards her and gently made her sit down, then going to a side table, she poured out some water into a glass and brought it to her; the crystal rattled against the woman's teeth as she tried to drink a little of the liquid, and her head sunk forward on her breast.

Bell watched her in silent anxiety; she did not seem about to faint, it seemed rather as if some mental horror had suddenly overcome her; she trembled violently, and great drops of perspiration stood upon her forehead, and her young mistress gently wiped them away.

"It was a cruel necessity, Dorcas," she said, in a low tone of pain; "but it was a necessity! Even Mason agreed—nay, was it not she who suggested it? She who had not such strong motives as we had, who was only interested because she deemed it justice. Do not let it distress you so terribly, my dear old friend. It was for Pauline's sake, you know?"

"Yes, and if it were to be done again, I should do it again," the woman said huskily. "It was right—it was just; but sometimes, as now, the remembrance of it overcomes me."

Again the violent shuddering overcame her; she tried to rise but sank back helplessly.

"Forgive me!" she pleaded hoarsely. "Bear with me a little, my dear! The room whirls round, and the air sings in my ears as it did then—as it did then!"

Once more her head sank heavily, her figure swayed forward as she sat; Bell ran to support her.

"Dorcas," she said hurriedly, "compose yourself. It is over long ago. There was no real sin in what we did. It was right. It was our fate. We were right."

"Right! Yet you swooned at the mere thought," Mrs. Fane said brokenly, looking up at her with dim eyes. "Oh, Miss Bell—forgive me, the fear of it seems to have driven me mad!"

"The fear of it!" the girl exclaimed passionately. "There can be no fear now. It would have been discovered long ago if there were the faintest chance of discovery. But there is none. And if there were sin it was justifiable. It was her wish, her most earnest wish, and if it had not been granted she would not have rested happily in her grave!"

"I know—I know," Dorcas said faintly.

She was recovering her composure and had ceased to tremble, but the paroxysm of terror, short and sudden as it had been, had left her very weak; her head had fallen back upon the cushions of her chair; her hand hung passive and inert by her side; she looked aged, broken down in health and spirits.

"Oh, forgive me, Miss Bell," she said. "I ought not to have distressed you."

Bell looked at her steadily for a moment, then, kneeling down, she took one of the woman's clay-cold hands in hers; at another moment Mrs. Fane, who belonged to the old-fashioned school of servants, would have resisted such an attitude in her young mistress, but now she submitted passively.

"Dorcas," Bell said, in low, steady tones, "on the day our darling died, we resolved to revenge her death. We knew, and had seen, how her sweet life had been cut off suddenly, in its youth and beauty, by the cruel hand of the man to whom she had given her love. We saw—we can never forget the sight—the agony she endured of mind and body, agony caused by his treachery, and we resolved then that since his crime was not punishable by law, yet the murderer should not go unpunished? And we resolved, too—you will remember, oh, Dorcas; you can have forgotten nothing connected with that terrible time!—that no means could be too base to defeat his scheme of wealth, no means too shameful, if by using them, we could revenge her death!"

"Yes, Yes!" murmured Dorcas.

"And then, was vengeance not within our grasp, should we have let it go for want of a little courage? I say again the end justified the means! If we had not acted as we did we should have lost all; he would have triumphed. It was not wrong! It was wrong according by law perhaps, but many things that are sinful in our eye are right in law, and many things which are right to us, the law forbids."

She rose slowly from her knees as she spoke, and standing at the housekeeper's side, was silent for a brief space; then she bent over Dorcas, who had almost completely recovered herself now, and put her hand upon her shoulder.

"I am afraid my passion frightened you, Dorcas," she said gently; "it shall not alarm you again. It is not only exhausting," she went on with a slight laugh, "but imprudent. We— I, certainly—need all our coolness now to continue our scheme so well begun, and if I distress myself so foolishly, my looks will suffer. And,"—she moved from Mrs. Fane's side and slowly crossed the room—"I must not lose my looks, because he is an artist, and susceptible to beauty, and——"

A grim smile crossed her lips, altering her face strangely for a moment as she paused. Dorcas, looking at her, guessed the thought which was in her mind; the horror which had faded from her face resumed its sway, dawning slowly in her sunken eyes and spreading over her face. She sprang to her feet with a little cry.

Bell turned and looked at her.

"What is it?" she asked. "How have I frightened you now, Dorcas?"

"You do not frighten me, Miss Bell," the woman panted; "you terrify me! What is the purpose I think I can read upon your face? Oh, pray Heaven that I am mistaken."

"You are not mistaken!" Bell answered calmly. "What is it you read in my face, Dorcas? A desire—nay, a resolve,—to make Geoffrey Hamilton love me as she loved him, that I may pay her debt in full? Probably that is what you read, for it is the truth—that is what I mean to do!"

"Oh, no, Miss Bell; oh, no. It is too horrible. You have not thought, you have not considered."

"There is no need for thought; there is no need for consideration," Bell said calmly. "I have but one duty in life now, and all else must be subservient to it. Dorcas!" she broke out passionately, "why are you crying? Have you forgotten? Will you read the letter again? Do you need to be reminded of what we resolved that night? Do you need to be told that he killed her? Oh, my murdered darling!" she cried wildly, "let everyone else fail you, I never will!"

"It is not that, Miss Bell," Dorcas said through her tears. "I feel the wrong done her as bitterly as ever, but it is horrible to think of the risk you run. May we not be content with what we have done? Just think how you degrade yourself when you stoop to such a task as this!"

"Do you think I have not thought?" the girl asked passionately. "Do you think I do not see the degradation as clearly as you see it? Do you think I shall not hate and despise the part I am going to play? Do you think anything will ever cleanse my soul from its foul stain? And do you suppose I do not think so? And yet, Dorcas, if I live I must do it! Something—something I cannot resist, something stronger than myself; I think I would not resist it if I could, but I cannot—forces me on, and shows me the path I must go!"

She paused, breathless with the passion which held her; then, after a moment resumed:

"Something shows me the path, and I must follow it! I saw last night—oh, it is horrible, but it is true!—he admired me and that more than admiration was possible if I so chose. Remember that I am not poor and obscure as my darling was! Remember that I possess all the wealth he longed for, and which would have been his if he had spared my sister; that my surroundings add to my charm for him, because he is a snob and a coward; and while truth, and purity, and simplicity, and love such as she poured at his feet were nothing to him, riches, and luxury, and ease have substantial claims! Oh, never fear but I shall succeed!"

Again she paused, but only for a moment, and then continued, still passionately:

"And then I look forward to the time when he loves me, and I can make him suffer, in some measure, as she suffered. He will not suffer as she did, because he cannot feel and love as she felt and loved; but, still, he shall know as much suffering as it is possible for him to feel. And then—oh! then only will I feel that she has been partly avenged."

"Oh, Miss Bell, it is horrible! You are so young—you do not understand," Dorcas entreated, feeling helpless before this passion of anger and revenge; "besides there is something you should know. I would not have told you," she continued faintly, "if I could have kept it from you; I think, I fear that——"

"Go on! What is it?" the girl said sternly. "Hide nothing from me. Let me have at least one friend whose loyalty I can depend upon, in whom I can place entire confidence, implicit faith. What is it that you fear?"

"I fear—oh, Miss Bell, it is this that has made me feel so weak and nervous! It was this that made me dread to see you last night. I fear that someone suspects what we——"

Her voice failed her, again the trembling seized her, she sank helplessly into her chair, staring at her mistress with wide-open, terrified eyes.

"That someone suspects us?" Bell repeated slowly, turning very white. "Who can suspect us now, after all these months; it is impossible. Your fears mislead you, Dorcas; there is no one who could suspect us."

"Yes, there is one person," stammered Dorcas, with shaking lips.

"Who is it?" asked Bell, looking at her steadily.

Before the woman's trembling lips had power to reply, there was a knock at the room door which made them both start.

"Sit still," Bell said imperatively.

As Dorcas sprang to her feet and stood trembling helplessly from head to foot, she pushed her gently into her chair again. Then, turning towards the door, she said quietly:

"Come in."

The door opened. A footman appeared on the threshhold; he advanced towards his mistress, holding a salver on whose shining surface, lay a small white object—a gentleman's visiting card. Miss Hamilton took it quietly and glanced at it. A faint, very faint, tinge of pink rose in her face.

"Where have you shown this gentleman?"

"Into the library, ma'am," the man answered, with that perfect composure, and respect, and unconsciousness of all around him, which characterize the well-trained servant.

"Quite right. Tell him I will be with him in a few minutes."

The man disappeared, closing the door noiselessly after him. Bell stood hesitating for a moment, then she turned to Dorcas.

"You had better stay quietly here, Dorcas," she said gently, "until I return. Mr. Holt is in—what is it, Dorcas?"

For the housekeeper had sprung from her seat as if suddenly galvanized into life.

"You asked me who suspected us, Miss Mabel," she said hoarsely, pointing with trembling finger at the card the girl held. "There is only one person who could do so, and his name is there!"

CHAPTER XVI.

A silence—sudden, profound, yet full of intense significance—followed Mrs. Fane's hoarsely-spoken words. Both women stood mute and motionless, their eyes fixed upon the little white card which Bell held in her unsteady fingers; both were very pale, but the terror on Mrs. Fane's features was not reflected upon her young mistress's, although Bell's face had altered perceptibly at her words, and the triumph and anger, and sorrow and exultation, had all blended into an expression of sudden and intense suffering.

Dorcas Fane could not guess—she did not even imagine—the sting her words held for Mabel Stanley.

Yet it was Mabel who broke the silence first; when she spoke her voice had changed; it had lost some of its sweetness and music; it was muffled and tuneless and dull.

"Sit down," she said quietly, seating herself as she spoke. "You are not fit to stand, Dorcas. You need hide nothing from me now," she continued gently. "It is better that I should know all. When did you discover that Mr. Holt suspected us?"

She spoke quite calmly, for she saw that Dorcas Fane's nerves had completely given way under the recent strain upon them, and she carefully concealed whatever agitation she herself felt, not to distress her further.

"Yesterday," the housekeeper answered, as if mechanically.

"Yesterday! How was that? He has seen you so often, Dorcas. He travelled home with us, and there has never been anything to lead me to suppose that Mr. Holt suspected us, the girl said, the color coming back to her lips; from whence it had faded in her first startled surprise. "You must be mistaken, Dorcas."

"I am not mistaken," was the steady, mournful answer. "You never saw anything to lead you to think that Mr. Holt suspected us for a very good reason, Miss Bell—there was nothing until yesterday. He never suspected us until yesterday!"

Mabel looked at her old servant in surprise and dismay. For a minute she began to fear that Dorcas's strange manner and words denoted illness, that her brain was affected; but the calm tone in which she spoke, the calm, sorrowful eyes which met her own showed her her mistake.

"Until yesterday," she repeated thoughtfully. "And what aroused his suspicions yesterday, Dorcas?"

"I will tell you, Miss Bell. Mr. Holt called here yesterday afternoon. When he heard you were out, he asked to see me, to give me a message for you which he did not care to trust to anyone else."

"Yes, and then?"

"I came down to him of course," Mrs. Fane continued, moistening her dry lips, as she went on. "He was in the library."

She paused, and uplifting her handkerchief to her forehead, wiped the drops of water which had gathered there; her hand shook as she did so; although she had regained much of her self-control, the terror, which had held her sleepless and miserable in its grasp all night, still held her.

"Well?" Mabel said, in suspense too great to be patient.

"He spoke to me kindly and courteously, as he always does," Dorcas continued hoarsely. "Mr. Holt is a true gentleman, Miss Mabel, and he said he wished to write down the address of the person whom, by your wish, he had been enquiring about."

"The poor woman who applied to me for assistance, yes?—I know," Bell said quietly, but the color had faded from her lips again—she was beginning to guess what had followed.

"He would have written it himself, Miss Mabel, but I offered to do so because he had his gloves on. It was a fatal mistake, my dear," she added brokenly; "it struck me even while I was writing the address that it was so, and when I had finished, and I looked up, I saw that a suspicion of the truth had struck him suddenly. He had grown very pale and looked startled, and I know—oh, Miss Bell forgive me!—that at the moment my own face showed him what I feared!"

"Did he say anything, Dorcas?" Bell asked faintly. She herself did not know

why the woman's words affected her so painfully.

"Nothing, Miss Bell. He left almost directly; but as he said good-bye his very voice had changed, and seemed hard and cold."

There was an interval of silence; the relief she experienced, at having unburdened her mind to her mistress, showed itself on Dorcas Fane's face as she leaned back wearily.

Bell sat quite still, her face set and stern, as it carved in stone, her eyes fixed on the Persian carpet at her feet; nothing save her marble pallor showing the intense pain she had felt at the words she had just heard.

"I think you must have been mistaken, Dorcas, she said gently, schooling herself to speak calmly, almost indifferently. "It seems impossible that so trifling a thing should arouse suspicion in Mr. Holt's mind. If he had conceived any previous suspicions he might have had, them confirmed, but under the circumstances it seems—nay, it is—impossible that any suspicion should have been aroused. It is not as if there had been any question of it before, you know."

"I know it seems impossible, Miss Bell, but nevertheless it is true. I read it in Mr. Holt's face as surely as I can see you at this moment," Dorcas answered sadly. "I read it in his face, and I heard it in the altered tones of his voice."

"It is imagination," the girl said reassuringly, although her voice was strangely troubled. "You have not been well for some time, and you have suffered yourself to dwell upon it until you cannot forget it, and you have grown nervous, and suspicious, and unhinged."

"It is not that, Miss Bell," the housekeeper answered steadily; "I wish it were! I have been out of health, truly, but until I saw that look upon the young man's kind face I was not nervous. I have been nervous since, though," she continued brokenly, "oh, so nervous, Miss Bell. Last night the terror of it was upon me so strongly that I thought I should have died!"

"My poor Dorcas," Bell said gently, her eyes resting on the servant's face with a kind, sorrowful look. "I think you are distressing yourself needlessly."

Dorcas shook her head.

"No needless suspicion could have distressed me so terribly," she said hoarsely. "Miss Bell, you know me. I am not a nervous woman, you have proved that. I can be strong, and determined, and revengeful. I am not to be startled by a mere trifle. I tell you, that when Mr. Holt left me yesterday, I stood in the library without power to move; I thought I should have gone mad—my head was swimming, my heart seemed as if it would burst. No mere causeless fear would have had such an effect upon me. I do not know how I got to my room, but I got there somehow, for when I recovered myself I was there, in my arm-chair, quite alone, and the door was locked on the inside. I must have come up-stairs and locked myself in, but I know nothing about it; I was quite unconscious of what I was doing."

She paused for breath. She was pale as death as she continued, in the same broken voice:

"If you had been at home, Miss Bell, I should have come to you at once," she said. "But you were out, and would not return till late. I sent word to the servants that I was lying down with a headache, and I remained up-stairs alone, lying on my bed, and hiding my face from the light. Oh! how glad I was when night came! There seemed something comforting in the darkness! All night long I lay there and thought, and when the morning came I had not decided whether to tell you what I feared or not."

"I am glad you told me, Dorcas," Bell said gently—"very glad! If you and I cannot confide in each other after what has passed, we should indeed be desolate. But I am glad for another reason. If we talk this quietly over together, you will see how foolish, how groundless your fears are."

She moved her chair closer to the housekeeper's, and put her little white hand on the servant's larger but almost equally white one. Mrs. Fane's position in her young mistress's household was a responsible one, doubtless, but for the last two years she had done no work calculated to soil her hands or roughen them; perhaps had she had more occupation her health would not have suffered as it had done of late.

"You have been nervous and out of sorts lately, Dorcas," began Bell gently, "and this has made you fearful. There is no possibility—I repeat it without any hesitation—of any definite suspicion being aroused in Mr. Holt's mind. He may have been struck for a moment by some shadowy likeness, and——"

"He knew me, Miss Bell," Mrs. Fane said quietly. "I am sure he knew me. Oh, my dear, consider! I am changed, and it is the change in me which told him the truth. I look now—look at me and you will see—I look now as I did then that night!"

"He did not see you clearly that night, Dorcas," answered Bell hurriedly. "He did not see you. The very idea of suspicion being aroused in his mind is preposterous! How could it be? You have grown morbid and weak, dear," she continued, tenderly, "and if I did not love you so much, I should scold you!"

She put her lips to the housekeeper's cheek, and kissed her as she went on:

"And if you love me——"

"If I love you, Miss Bell?" murmured Dorcas, interrupting her.

"No, not if you love me, but because you love me you will cheer up and be your own brave self again! You must not brood over the past; it is weak and foolish. In a few months, perhaps sooner, Dorcas, we will give up the money to the hospitals, and go back to the White House, and live quietly and contentedly as we can, and do all the good we can."

"Oh, come now, Miss Bell, give it up now," the housekeeper said, pressing the girl's hands in hers; "give up the rest. I have thought more than once, but last night I felt convinced that she would not wished any revenge; that she would have have forgiven—that——"

She paused abruptly. Bell had risen, and was moving away from her with a sudden angry darkening of her beautiful large eyes.

"Do you fail me, Dorcas?" she said coldly. "Well be it so! Go back to the White House as soon as you like, and leave me here to continue the work we began together, and in which you joined so bravely until now."

"Miss Bell, do not be angry," Dorcas pleaded, rising eagerly and following her. "You are right; I am ill and nervous. I mean nothing by my wild words, except that it is true that he knows——"

"You will cling to that belief," said her mistress, forcing a smile. "Well, be it so; do not let it trouble you, Dorcas. If Mr. Holt knew for certain what we know, he would not betray us."

"You think not, Miss Bell?" the housekeeper said dubiously.

"I do not think—I am sure," the girl answered quietly. "I will go to him now. Stay here and rest, and try to remember that our cause is a righteous one, and in what we did we wronged no one."

She smiled at the woman's anxious face as she turned to leave the room; then, obeying a second impulse, she ran back to her and caught her hands in both her own.

"Oh, Dorcas, think how she died!" she cried passionately; "think how she suffered! Remember her last words—'Stabbed to the heart! Stabbed to the heart! Shall such a crime remain unpunished? Shall her murderer be free to break other hearts and wreck other lives? No; a thousand times no! Do you never recall that scene now?" she continued, her burning, intense eyes fixed upon Mrs. Fane's pale, haggard, face. "Do you never see her gasping out her life in our arms, as I see her? Do you never feel her heavy head upon your breast, as I feel it? Do you never awake at night from a dream that you are holding her shuddering, dying form in your arms, and that she is talking of the man whom she loved—who killed her. Do you forget the agony upon her beautiful face? Her face!—she who never willingly wounded a fly! Oh, if you do forget, you are fortunate! I cannot! I cannot! I think I never shall!"

She dropped the nerveless hands she had been holding in here and turned away. Never had that terrible death-bed scene been more clearly before her eyes than now.

Never had she felt more strongly that anything was allowable which would give her the vengeance for which she craved, and which had been for two whole years the primary motive of her life. Never had she been more decided as to its justice, its righteousness as now.

Her earnestness was not without its effect upon the flagging courage and nervous susceptibility of the other woman. A flush rose in her pale cheeks, her eyes brightened with a new resolve and determination.

"I have not forgotten, Miss Bell," she said sternly. "Forgive my weakness, I am strong now, and I will go back to my work. Shall I tell them to ask Mr. Holt to come here, my dear?" she added gently. "Perhaps you would rather not see him now?"

"No, I will see him. I will go to him in the library, Dorcas," the young girl said quietly. "You need not be afraid that I shall betray myself, and do you, old friend, go back to your pretty patient, and cheer her with a promise that she shall never know again what it is to faint from hunger in the London streets. Be very good to her, Dorcas," she added, her voice softening into tenderness; "she has blue eyes like Pauline's."

There were tears of earnest feeling in Mrs. Fane's eyes as, slowly and heavily, for she was weak still from the agitation of the last hour, she left the room; but there were no tears in the eyes of the girl she had left, as she stood alone in her pretty boudoir, holding both her hands pressed close to her heart as if their pressure could deaden the pain there—the pain which was always there now—latent sometimes when her conscience let it rest, at others, as now, keen, stinging, acute.

"Oh, Lina!" she murmured with pale lips, as she stood there motionless in her long, clinging gown of white. "Oh, Lina, Lina!"

And then, mastering her emotion by a strong effort—her pain and grief lay too deep to find their natural vent in tears and lamentations—she left the room, passed along the hall with its marble pavement, and statues, and tall spreading palms in their quaint china tubs, to the library, where awaited her the man who, perhaps, if the housekeeper were correct in her surmise, shared the terrible secret which she had deemed so safe: the secret which, if divulged, would not only destroy her revenge on Geoffrey Hamilton, but would blight her life with shame and unspeakable disgrace!

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WHAT TO TEACH.—At a social gathering some one asked this question: "What shall I teach my daughter?" The following replies were handed in:

Teach her that one hundred cents make a dollar.

Teach her how to arrange the rooms in the house tastefully.

Teach her to say "No" and mean it, or "Yes" and stick to it.

Teach her how to wear a calico dress, and wear it like a queen.

Teach her how to sew on buttons, darn stockings, and mend gloves.

Teach her to dress for health and comfort as well as for appearance.

Teach her to cultivate flowers and to keep the kitchen garden.

Teach her that tight lacing is uncomely as well as injurious to health.

Teach her to regard the morals and habits and not money, in selecting her associates.

Teach her to observe the rule: "A place for everything, and everything in its place."

Teach her that music, drawing, and painting are real accomplishments in the house, and are not to be neglected if there be time and money for their use.

Teach her the important truism: "That the more she lives within her income the more she will save, and the further she will get away from the poor-house."

Teach her that a good, steady, religious mechanic, farmer, clerk, or teacher, without a cent is worth more than any selfish, irreligious drone, no matter how wealthy, well-dressed, or handsome.

Teach her to embrace every opportunity for reading, and to select such books as will give the most useful and practical information, in order to make the best progress in earlier as well as later home and school life.

HOW THEY COURT.—Going along the streets of Mexico City, says a correspondent, one day I saw a young man flipping his fingers grotesquely, as though playing an imaginary tattoo in the air. I looked all around, but couldn't see anything. The next day I saw him at it again, gazing skyward all the time. I went into a hotel and one of my friends asked me if I had seen that young fellow who was courting that young girl. I fell at once, and looking out I saw a girl in a third-story window, looking at him and doing the tattoo act also. Said my friend: "This business has been going on for two years, and neither of them has spoken a word." It was so. They were courting. That's the way they do it down there. It was a flirtation, long and protracted, but whether the pantomime was translatable into language I am unable to say.

MISS HOMERSHAM, who is lecturing in England on nursing, recommends that the sick-room should contain only two chairs. "One, a very comfortable one, for the nurse, and a very uncomfortable one for the visitors who stay too long."

Bric-a-Brac.

BLIZZARD.—The word "blizzard" is not of American origin. It has been used in England from time immemorial to denote blazing, blinding, dazzling or stifling. To face a severe storm they say "it was a blizzer;" of a flash of lightning, "it was a blizzener," and putting a log on the fire, "let's have a blizzer," meaning a blaze. In Yorkshire they have a favorite "cuss" word, which might be appropriately adopted out West, "May I be blizzarded!"

FORKS.—The custom of using forks at tables is even this day far from universal. The Turkish inhabitants of the Levant, and all the eastern nations still serve themselves with their fingers only. The Chinese use small sticks, which require considerable dexterity of management; but a man of fashion in Abyssinia disdains the use of either. When he dines he seats himself between two of his wives, each of whom rolls up slices of meat into the form of balls, which they cram into his mouth as he presents it to them alternately.

BISCUITS.—Biscuits appear to have been the most ancient form of bread. It is not known how early fermentation was introduced, but it appears certain that cakes made simply of flour and water preceded it. Such cakes, of the Neolithic age, are found in the lake-beds of Switzerland—and these are the oldest surviving specimens of bread. The Greeks called them "bread exposed twice to the fire." Our word *biscuit*—*bis*, twice, and *coctus*, French *cuit*, cooked the same in meaning as the Greek name—is a survival from the original method of preparing the cakes, which is no longer in use.

PIN MONEY.—In the fourteenth century, makers of pins were only allowed to sell their commodity openly in the two first days of the year, and Court ladies and city dames flocked to the depots to buy them, having first been provided with the necessary funds by their husbands. In 1347, we read that one thousadd two hundred pins were delivered from the Royal wardrobe for the use of the Princess Joan. Pins were pins in those days, and costing much money, were taken care of. It is from the fact that husbands allowed their wives so much money per year to purchase pins, that we get the common phrase, "Pin money," which still remains, though the cause for its use has long since passed away.

POSITION FOR THE FEET.—A curious story of superstition comes from Omaha. During a marriage ceremony in a Justice's office the bride's mother rushed in and told the magistrate to stop a moment. She looked at the carpet on the floor and said: "Judge, I am a little superstitious; which way does the cracks run in this floor?" This was a puzzler for the judge, but being in an accomodating spirit he ripped up about two yards of the carpet, and found that the seams of the floor ran crosswise of the feet of the young couple he was about to unite. The position of the bride and groom was changed. The old lady gave a sigh of relief and the ceremony proceeded.

CHINESE CUNNING.—A district magistrate of Shanghai had brought before him a man charged with stealing a table. The man denied the charge, alleging that he was so feeble from ill-health that it was impossible for him to commit a crime. The magistrate listened gravely to the tale, and professed his sympathy and sorrow for the poor man. "Go home," he said "and get cured, and, as you are very poor, take that bag, which contains a large amount of cash, as a present from me." The prisoner made obeisance, threw the heavy bag over his shoulder, and departed. He had not gone far before he was arrested, brought back and found guilty, the magistrate remarking that a man who could carry off a heavy sack, could have had no difficulty in stealing a table.

THE ELEPHANT.—I once asked an Indian officer what was the cleverest act he ever knew an elephant to perform; and he told me how once, when unloading some steel tubing from on board a ship, it was the elephant's task to carry the pipes by means of his trunk from one part of the ship to another. The pipes had been oiled to prevent them from rusting, and as the elephant took one up, it slipped from his grasp. He tried it again with the same result, and at last seemed to comprehend what the reason of all this was; for he shortly afterwards pushed up the pipe with his foot to where there was a pile of sand, and then rolled the piping backward and forward. The sand, owing to the oil, adhered to the tube, and the elephant then put his trunk round it and carried it with ease. He did the same to the remainder without aid or suggestion from his mahout.

ASHES.

BY S. A. D.

I.

As two who once were lovers in the Spring,
But who have seen their dreams fall faint and die,
And now together to the fire draw nigh,
Not for the warmth of close hearts whispering;
And looking in each other's eyes, they fling
Into the flames dead flowers, old memory,
The locks of hair, the letters, each a sigh,
The soulless symbol of the wedding ring:

So we, whose love will die with these last hours
Of fiery sunset, come to it and cast
Into its embers all dreams overpast,
The hopes stillborn, the cankered passion flowers,
The broken boughs of Love's own Eden bowers;
Lo, Love is dust and ashes at the last.

II.

Yet when the voice, before the first gray light,
Of love's pale ghost goes wailing round the room
Waking faint echoes in that ghastly tomb
Which was the shrine of his remembered rite,
And gropes among the ashes cold and white;
Shall he not find, for all the shuddering gloom,
The golden ring that fire could not consume,
Shining upon the hearthstone, whole and bright?

And when the dawn of death shall flush the dark,
And strike the sunset ashes, where no spark
Of the old glory quickens, shall not love
Espy and snatch from out those embers cold
The unscathed circlet and the hearts of gold,
And freshly wed us in his home above?

From Out the Storm.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DICK'S SWEETHEART," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—(CONTINUED)

"SUCH a knife as you never yet saw, a very prince amongst knives!" went on the unfortunate Kitts, afraid to draw breath. "Is it a bargain? Will that knife purchase your silence?"

"Will you give me that one—the one with the four blades?"

"Certainly. I'll swear it, madam, an you will; but you must promise me in turn that you will not say a word of what I said now about the conservatory to Lord Wriothesley or to Lady Wriothesley—especially Lady Wriothesley. You promise?"

"Yes, to be sure," said she, with fine contempt. "Why, what a fuss about nothing. And now where's the knife?"

"You shall have it; I'll write to town for it in the morning. It will be a most appropriate Christmas present," said Mr. Kitts, with a poor attempt at jocularity. "I only hope it will be half as sharp as you are, and it will be a knife beyond price."

"That was a near shave," he gasped to himself presently, as he mopped his heated brow.

* * * * * *

"That fellow is in love with her," said Wriothesley suddenly.

He faced Mrs. Verulam as he spoke, and looked at her with a frowning brow, as though daring her to deny it.

He had made his way, on the morning after the idolized Dorcas meeting, to the pretty private room always set apart for Cicely on her visits to her sister-in-law, and now stood glowering at her from the admirable elevation of six feet one.

Glowering however had never very much effect upon Mrs. Verulam; and on this day, as administered by Wriothesley, it gave her only a meek joy.

"What fellow?" she asked, wrinkling her pretty brows as if in perplexity.

"You know, Savage."

"Oh!"—long drawn out. "That—that of course."

"Why of course?"—hotly.

"Because she is so charming"—coldly. "If you go into it, I could name you at least three or four others who would be only too happy to lay themselves and their very considerable fortunes at her feet to-morrow."

"You talk of her as though she were an unmarried girl!"

"That is how they talk of her too. You see, she was so little married. She was on evidence, if you like; but where were you?"

"I was in South America"—stiffly, giving a direct answer, as if to show he scorned apology.

"Quite so," said she cheerfully. "And they knew it, most of them; they quite clung to that knowledge. Your coming home was a terrible blow, as unexpected as it was undesired."

"By her?"

"We are talking of those foolish people who have lost their hearts to her, if indeed men have hearts," said she, with a little shrug. "I assure you your return was a distinct betise; you should have surrendered yourself to a grizzly over there—wherever you were—in that delightfully enthralling place that kept you from her for nearly two years."

"You think then that I am in her—her way?"

"I think there are men who would treat her better than you have done."

"You are at all events very plain-spoken—a charm no doubt, but an unpalatable one. I do not quarrel with you about that however, it would be useless. I can see your sympathies are enlisted on my wife's side."

"Your what? Oh, Marvel! Positively one is so unaccustomed to think of her as a woman with a husband that I hardly understood."

"You have grown bitter, Cicely, a gain on which I can scarcely congratulate you. Of course, as I have said, you have adopted Marvel's cause; and I cannot hope for a fair hearing from you. You believe me altogether to blame in this matter that lies, that at least should lie, between her and me alone. Yet you should remember in all common honesty that it was she who first tired of me."

"Nonsense! I suppose you didn't imagine she was going to stay with you to watch you day after day moping and sulking, and regretting another woman every hour of your existence? Allow her some little spirit."

"She is hardly deficient in that line, I think," said he, with a sneer that enraged her champion.

"She is the gentlest creature alive, and the most lovable. If you cannot see that, I pity you, but her more. What would you have—an angel? She is almost that, I believe. Would any one but her have received you with the exquisite forgiveness that she showed?"

"Forgiveness? Why, she has treated me ever since as though I were the dust beneath her feet! Call that forgiveness?"

"You are not able to appreciate her because she is too good for you; I would have you take care however—other people can."

She grew quite terrible in her denunciation of him, and in this hint drove him to deeper anger than he already felt.

"To talk like that!" he said. "'Tis a simple thing—any one could do it; but there is always the other side to be considered. And I—have I nothing to forgive?"

"Nothing that I know of. I wonder you can even pretend to it," said she scornfully.

She turned more directly towards him, and raised her indignant eyes to his.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," she said. "I really do think you might give up that old flirtation."

"What do you mean by that?" he asked quickly.

"As you remarked a moment since, I am plain-spoken. What I mean then is your most ill-advised flirtation with Mrs. Scarlett."

"Pshaw!" he said. "I thought you clever enough to see that old affair is over and done with. If you did love her once, I have lived to wonder at it."

"Denial is a simple thing; words are no doubt invaluable; but deeds are beyond them. If I wish me to believe what you have just said, you should act up to yours."

"Why, what do you want then? Am I to swear in public that I have got rid of that ancient infatuation?"

"Never lose your temper," said Mrs. Verulam mildly; "it gains one nothing, and so is valueless. 'Deeds not words' is a good old motto belonging to some one or other; I would have you bear it in mind. If you wish me to believe you in this matter of Mrs. Scarlett, tell me why you devoted yourself to her all last evening in the conservatory, withdrawing yourself from the others, and making yourself as conspicuous with her as you very well could."

"There were certain things that had to be said to her, and it was as well I should say them at once. I wished her to understand."

"Well, I hope you obtained your wish," said Cicely drily, "and that it will not be necessary to make her understand again."

"I hope not also; but at all events, she made me understand."

"Did she? She is certainly capable of a good deal," said Mrs Verulam, regarding him keenly. "Did she tell you that Marvel was in love with Nigel Savage?"

"I did not require her assistance to learn that; as I came out of the conservatory I saw her with him—Savage. If she hates me—as she does," said he vehemently—"and if she tells him so, I think she might have the decency to do it in private. Her look, the dejection that marked her face, shall I ever forget it?"

"I hope you won't," said Mrs. Verulam wrathfully. "I hope it will haunt you, for it is all your own doing. You can traduce that sweet girl—that child—as you will; but all your disbelief and all that woman's villainy will not be able to lay her beautiful head in the dust. Oh, Fulke, that you should be so blinded to all that is good and true!"

"You condemn me without a hearing. You accuse me of being unfair to Marvel, and of being unduly civil to Mrs. Scarlett; but, as I tell you, there were certain things that had to be said to that lady."

"And Marvel? I don't see why anything should be said to Mrs. Scarlett, though I think there is a great deal that should be said to Marvel. You can fling away your own chances of happiness, of course, as recklessly as you will; but, in the dead flatness that will follow on it, remember now I warned you."

"Those chances are no longer mine," he said gloomily—so gloomily that she thought his mind was on the woman he had loved two years before.

"So much the better for you," she said.

"You acknowledge that it is so then?" he asked.

"I am certainly not going to discuss it with you," said she indignantly. "What I alone desire to impress upon you is that Marvel noticed your devotion to Mrs. Scarlett last night, and very naturally was both annoyed and offended by it."

"Pshaw!" said he contemptuously. "I don't believe she would care if I devoted myself to Mrs. Scarlett all day long; she treats me with absolute indifference."

"Pity she doesn't bow down to you and solicit your love!" said Mrs. Verulam vehemently.

She was now in fine scolding order, and prepared to say a great many things that she called "wholesome truths," but which certainly would have disagreed terribly with Wriothesley.

Providence, however, in the shape of Lady Lucy, entered the room and put an end to Wriothesley's *mauvais quart-d' heure*.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WHY not send back the carriages and let us all walk home through the woods?" said Savage, with some animation, addressing Mrs. Dameron. "I should think we've got all the birds we are likely to get to-day."

"Yes. Cover's used up," said Lord Verulam, in his lazy way.

The snow that fell during the previous week was now almost forgotten; it ceased as suddenly as it began; sharp rains followed, and they in turn gave place to a severe but wholesome frost that left the ground as hard as iron.

All the men of the party had been out since dawn shooting one of the home covers, and at two o'clock had been joined by the gentler members, who had driven to a keeper's lodge, armed with numerous baskets and hampers wherewith to allay the pangs of hunger of the mighty hunters.

Luncheon was over now, and indeed the day was declining.

The footmen were going about putting up the plates and dishes, and the fragments that remained the keeper's wife was carrying off for the delectation of her numerous offspring, who were huddled out of sight in some of the other rooms.

The luncheon-party had long since emerged into the sombre twilight that awaited them outside, and were looking at their guns with evident half-heartedness.

"Charming evening for a walk," said Mr. Kitts, brightening visibly under Savage's suggestion. "Lady Lucy, head our list of patrons and our procession too through the melancholy twilight of the lonely wood."

"I can't," said she, laughing. "I have these chicks to see to," pointing to a couple of her smaller fry, who were fighting valiantly in the background. "But, if the others wish to—— Cicely, what say you? How goes your vote—a drive home or a walk?"

"A walk, by all means," said Mrs. Verulam. "It is barely half-past three, and it is troubling me now to kill time till tea is due."

"You can have it now," said Lord Verulam. "Mrs. Machell, the keeper's wife, will get it ready for you in no time."

"No, thanks, not no sooner for me!" said Mrs. Verulam. "But a walk in the gloaming by all means! It is only a three-mile trot from this to Verulam, I think?"

She looked round for confirmation of her words to Savage, who stood near.

"Hopeless looking to me," he said, shaking his head. "I don't know the ropes round here. Ask Kitts; he is a perfect encyclopædia of learning."

"Three miles and a half as the crow flies and if you follow me," said he, "about ten if you follow your own vagaries and take an unguarded turn to the left or right."

"I'll follow you," said Mrs. Verulam, with decision.

"So will I," said Sir George, "in your company, if I may," this in a lower tone to Cicely.

They all paired off presently, except Marvel unfortunately, who had stayed to say a word or two to Lady Lucy and help the children into the carriage, the youngest of whom had conceived a violent fancy for her, and could be induced to enter the waiting landau only through a mistaken and carefully-fostered idea that she was to enter it with him.

When this latest of her devoted adherents was safely locked up, she turned to find that all the others of the party had already started and were quite a long way ahead, and that Nigel Savage alone remained to accompany her.

She flushed vividly; and Savage at once came to the conclusion that she was annoyed at being thus irremediably thrown upon his hands.

He was wrong however. She gave him no thought, all her girlish jealous heart being oppressed with the fear that Wriothesley was with Mrs. Scarlett.

She caught Savage's eye and smiled kindly at him.

"We shall have to run," she said, pointing to the group fast disappearing round a corner in the distance, "if we mean to catch them up. If we don't, we shall probably lose ourselves, like the 'Babes in the Wood,' as neither of us knows much about the country here."

"We are too near home to get very much lost," said he; "and, as long as they give us a lead, even at so great a distance, we shall at all events be sure to come in at last, if only as a bad third."

When they reached the corner, however, there was no sign of the others. Two paths lay before them, one running a little to the left, where Verulam ought to have lain; and in both there was a sharp bend a good deal farther on which would have hidden the advance party if they had gained it. Savage stood still and looked perplexed.

"Rapid people!" he said at last, with a rather amused laugh. "I think they might have given us a passing thought."

"I wish I had not delayed so long," said Marvel. "But Lady Lucy is such a chatterbox, and little Leslie so terribly exigeant. "After all"—laughing—"there are certain drawbacks in having so hopelessly devoted a lover."

Savage looked suddenly into her clear eyes. The words were tinged with coquetry, and would have meant a challenge from any other woman; but Marvel's soft laugh and unconscious gaze acquitted her of any *arriere-pensee*.

"This must be the path," she said, pointing to the one running to the left. "I am sure Verulam lies over there."

"We may as well take it, at all events, until we meet a rustic to set us right," said Savage.

They walked briskly through the deserted wood, the dry and frozen leaves crackling beneath their feet as they went.

The short brown grasses and yellowing moss that edged each side of the pathway were tipped with frost, and sparkled coldly in the dying light.

Some rooks were cawing in a half-hearted fashion above their heads amongst the leafless boughs of the elms, and far away in the distance could be heard the loud angry roar of a cascade as it dashed down the sides of granite rocks.

It was a cold, sharp evening, but dry and crisp, and the quick pace at which they moved set Marvel's blood aglow. A warm flush sprang into her cheeks, her eyes gleamed; she looked the very picture of youth and health and beauty as she walked beside him, straight and upright as a young sapling, "white as a white rose," with soft sweet mouth and earnest eyes, and pretty ruffled hair blowing about the broad, pure brow; the dark rich furs and dainty laces that she wore enhanced the clear beauty of her perfect skin, and her little fur cap sat closely to her small head.

She looked indeed unwontedly lovely on this dull wintry evening, in spite of the faintly troubled expression that always was in her eyes, and contrasted brilliantly with the general air of grayness that pervaded everything.

Savage walked beside her silently. He was very well content to be with her, though she never broke the silence—content to see her, to feel her near. Yet sometimes he wondered how it would all end.

Was she to live her life unloved, unloving, chained to a man who did not value her, who had spent his first best passion on a woman as false and worthless as any of the modern Delilahs he had ever met? How long would she rest contented with a life so empty?

Oh that he had met her two years ago, with a clear chance before him! He felt that the very strength of the love he bore her would have compelled her to love him in return.

Even now, seeing her so forlorn, so neglected, a passionate longing to declare that love was always pressing upon him. If she knew, would she care, would she turn to him?

He believed her heart untouched; he desired beyond all other good to awaken it to thoughts of him—and yet he dared not.

Passion was unknown to her; what then if she shrank from him in fear and loathing?

He told himself that he could not survive that; better this calm, exquisite, unsatisfying friendship than eternal banishment from all that the earth held dear for him.

No, she would not understand. She was not as those other women of his world, women who would perhaps have held him at arm's length too, but would not have rated his sin as a very unpardonable offence.

With her he knew it would mean sure banishment. He glanced at her pure soft profile in the growing dusk and read his fate there.

"Thou whose peerless
Eyes are fearless,
And thy thoughts as cold sweet lilies"

—no, she would not understand. Thick and fast the shadows grew; and then before them, looming in the path, rose all on a sudden, as it were, a tall old tower, ivy-covered, moss-grown, picturesque as a mediæval dream.

The gray mists of the coming night seemed already to have caught it and bathed its ancient walls in a tremulous haze that gave it a touch of weird and rather unreal beauty.

"How lovely!" said Marvel. "How is it we have not seen it before? Was there ever so quaint an old tower? I wonder if we could get into it. Oh, do let us try! See—it is quite close to us—it won't take us more than a yard or two out of our way."

"It is growing late," said he, with stern virtue.

It flashed across his mind that this divergence from his duty and his path would be both desirable and pleasant, considering that it would give him so much more of her undivided society; but he suppressed the thought with a determination that did him credit.

"It isn't late really; it is only because it is December," said she, still bent on exploring the old ruin that had taken her fancy. "Come, let us just look into it. We can make up for the delay by a good run afterwards, which will warm us."

Thus tempted, he fell.

"So we can," said he, with very suspicious alacrity, taking into account his hesitation of a moment before.

After all, it would take them only a minute or two to look into the mouldly old place, and, if it pleased her——

They ran across the grass, and presently found themselves opposite to a worm-eaten old door studded with huge iron nails and with a rusty key in the lock.

After using considerable force, this key

was induced to turn; the door opened with astonishing suddenness, as if loose on its hinges, and they stepped inside a dark passage that smelt of mouldering leaves and the dust of century gone by.

It was very dark. No light came from any ground-floor windows, for the simple reason that there were none; but a faint ray or two stole down the circular staircase that led to a chamber above lit by some long narrow openings in the walls barely wide enough to let a man's body slip sideways through them.

"Isn't it funny?" said Marvel, who was plainly delighted with it. "I wonder what is upstairs."

She ran lightly up the worn stone steps and stood at the top, looking round her in the uncertain light.

It was a semicircular apartment, with a stone floor and a huge wide fireplace facing the stairs.

It was a small hall rather than a room, as there was no door to it, and only a broken, rudely-formed stone parapet ran from the top of the stairs to the wall behind to prevent the unwary from falling over into the abyss beneath.

"One feels as though one had just stepped into another age," said Marvel looking eagerly round her.

"A dark one," said Savage.

"What a shame to take no notice of so interesting a place! A very little thought and trouble would transform it into something quite unique. An oak chair there, a table here, a roaring fire, a——"

"A few window-panes," suggested Savage.

"Tut—you are too prosaic! Well, in the summer then! Could you fancy a cooler—a more calm retreat? Not a fly to aggravate one, not a sound to disturb——"

At this moment there came a sound from below loud enough to wake the Seven Sleepers.

It was an absolute bang that seemed to shake the tower to its foundations, and made both its occupants start.

"So much for your calm retreat!" said Savage, with a rather nervous laugh—he had good reason to feel nervous!

"What was that?" exclaimed Marvel quickly.

"Sounded like a door, didn't it?" said he, with a carefully careless air.

"Why, that's what it was!" cried she, laughing. "How stupid of me not to guess it at once! That solid old piece of oak downstairs was just the sort of thing to shut to with a noise like a thunderclap."

"I'll run down and see if I am right in my conjecture," said he, suiting the action to the word.

When he got below, he found his worst fears confirmed. The heavy old door had swung back, obedient to some gust of wind, and, shutting with considerable force, had shot the lock into its place.

The key was on the outside, and there was therefore no earthly means of getting out of this unlucky tower, unless by chance some passer-by might come that way.

And what a chance was that! Savage felt the blood mount to his brow as he noted how the dying day was already dead, and that the coming darkness was even now beginning to cover all the land. Good gracious, what was to be done?

"Well," cried the sweet clear voice above, "are you going to spend the rest of our short time below there? See, here is such a cupboard!"

He mounted the steps very slowly. He knew he was afraid to tell her; yet it had to be done.

"Such a delicious little hiding-hole!" cried she, standing near the tiny recess she had discovered in the wall. "Just large enough to hold a few choice cups and saucers, and—— Oh, by-the-by, talking of cups, I expect we shall lose our tea if we don't make haste! Come—let us go!"

"Well, that's just it," said he slowly, his eyes fixed on the ground, his manner really wonderfully unconcerned. "The fact is, we can't!"

"What!"

"That solid old oak door you admired so much a few minutes ago has played us a rather unkind trick. It has shut itself up so tight that, like Sterne's starling, we can't get out."

He spoke very calmly, yet with secret trepidation, not knowing how she would take it.

He was a good deal surprised when he did know. She sat down on one of the stone benches that were built into the walls and laughed.

"How absurd!" she said. "Do you mean that we are prisoners?"

"It really amounts to that," said he gravely, a little off his guard because of his astonishment at her evident unconcern.

She noticed his gravity at once, and her laughter forsook her. Still, for all that, it was plain that she did not entirely realize the exact meaning of the situation.

"Oh, it can't be true!" she said hastily. "There must be some way of inducing it to open. A sudden shake may do it. Did you try?"

"I did, with all my might; but nothing came of it."

He was now disheartened by her sudden change of manner. How was he to allay the fears that each passing five minutes was sure to bring?

"After all, it is of no real consequence," he said. "It is early yet; and somebody going through the wood will let us out in time to scamper home for tea. You are one of the few people who can run, I know."

"Well, I hope your 'somebody' will come soon," said she, after a very slight pause.

There was so evident an effort to treat the matter lightly that his heart died within him. He knew that already she was afraid!

A shrill wind was rising. Now, in its babyhood, it merely sighed amongst the trees, but it gave brave promise of a strength in age.

Savage, leaning against the wall near one of the openings, looked out gloomily into the growing night, and tried in vain to think of something light, casual, to say which would persuade her that he at least was under no apprehension.

"I am glad we are in so public a part of the grounds," he said at last. "It would have been a little awkward if we had been shut up in a more isolated spot."

"Oh, yes!" said she, so cheerfully that his spirits rose. "I was just now thinking about that. Some one is sure to come—now—at any moment."

Yet many moments went by, and no one came. No sound broke upon their ears save the hoarse croaking of the rooks as they quarreled with the bare branches, now swaying wildly to and fro in the angry vehemence of the growing storm.

"What o'clock is it now?" asked she, after a pause that to him had seemed an eternity.

Yet he could not have broken it. He knew, if she did not, the danger of the gossip that already attached his name to hers, and he loved her too well and too sincerely not to dread the fresh edge to it that this unfortunate imprisonment would give.

"I can barely see," he said, taking out his watch and pretending to examine it by a light now almost gone. "About half-past four I make it. Quite early yet, as I have said."

"It is five," said she gently.

She too had a watch, and was looking at it, as he found to his dismay.

"Oh, Nigel, do you think it will be very much longer before any one comes?"

"Why, any second may bring some one," said he brightly, stretching his head out of the opening beside him, as if it were a sure thing that peasants would be walking about the wood in the cold chill evening, and that he might as well therefore be on the look-out to hail them.

He was glad to be able to thrust his head out somewhere that would prevent her reading his face even in this declining light.

A sickening certainty that no one would come was rendering him so miserable that he hardly dared to glance in the direction where she sat so curiously quiet. What horrible fate threw them into this awful situation?

He looked far and wide, but saw nothing save the endless masses of trees. After a while he drew himself in and sank upon the stone bench near him.

He waited breathlessly for her to ask him if he had seen anything; but, when the minutes passed, and she still kept silence, he was unspeakably thankful.

The storm had come at last! A great wind rose and shook the pines. Like thunder it rolled amongst the hills, sweeping with an eager fury round the old tower wherein they sat speechless, expectant.

Faint flashes of light glanced through the darkening woods and shone with a lurid brilliance upon the projecting masonry of one of the walls. All nature seemed alive.

The sea itself was stirred. Moans, heavy and sorrow-laden, came from it and rushed inland as it dashed itself with each wild incoming wave against the adamantine breasts of the eternal rocks.

Minute followed minute, until all the weary mass of them grew into an hour. Twice Marvel had spoken to Savage in a would-be hopeful tone, but with a cruel trembling of the beloved voice that drove him almost mad.

The awful thought that no one would ever come, or if any one came, it would be too late, began to render him wretched. What if they should be left there—alone—until the morning dawned?

He sprang to his feet, and began to walk feverishly up and down. The open agitation he thus betrayed communicated itself to her.

She roused herself from the lethargy into which she had apparently fallen, and in her turn rose to her feet.

"Nigel," she said, in a piercing voice, "where are you? I can't see you."

She held her hands to him.

"Oh, Nigel, what is to be done? Dear, dear Nigel, think of something!"

He went slowly to her and caught her hands.

"Above all things, don't give way," he said. "After all, what is it but an accident—a mere fiasco that a word or two will set right? You are trembling. Sit down again, and let us think what is best to be done."

He had no idea how to improve their sorry plight; but he would have said anything just then to soothe and comfort her, as he felt the desperate clinging of her slender fingers. What would be the end of it if no one came?

An answer came to that thought, swift, stinging as sharply with pleasure as with pain.

It almost overpowered him, holding him enthralled by the seductive power of it. Thus he might gain her.

She would be his, cast into his arms by a disbelieving world, though she stood innocent in word and deed before its tribunal. He trembled as the idea grew upon him; and then, all in a second, as it were, he shrank and cowered away from it. With her fair name sullied, her fair fame soiled—so would he win her?

He knew her too well, had gauged her lovely soul too closely, not to be sure that, honor lost, there would follow a broken heart. Oh, not at that price—no!

He had not been a good man perhaps. There had been passages in his life that would not bear looking into, and upon which he hated to look over since his eyes first fell on Marvel.

But there were germs of goodness in him too that that first sight of her had brought to light; and he cast behind him now in this his hour of temptation the evil spirit that would have led him to his destruction.

She sat down, as he had told her to do, shrinking back out of the ken of his eyes so that he might not see her, and began to cry silently, but in a deplorable manner.

Savage soon woke to the fact that she was in tears, and despair took possession of him.

"Don't do that!" he said roughly, but with such a passion of regret in his voice that the roughness went for nothing. "There isn't a single thing to be gained by it; and—— Marvel, don't cry! I"—very angrily—"I can't stand it! Come—be sensible, and listen to what I am going to say!"

She roused herself somewhat, and leaned towards him with an eager expectancy that touched him.

"If they find you were here alone," he went on, "nothing can be said."

He paused; and, as she still remained silent, he believed she did not understand.

"Now suppose—are you listening?—suppose I were to drop from that opening there"—pointing to the slit in the thick wall nearest to her—"I might reach the ground beneath without much injury to life or limb—so little injury indeed that I might even be able to get round to the door, open it and set you free. And, at all events, even if I failed in that last hope, no one could say a word to you if I were out of the way."

"If you were killed, you mean! I may be a coward," said she quietly, "but I am not so altogether craven that I would purchase my immunity from scandal with your life."

He could not see her dear face because of the blackness of the night that now had fallen upon them in its might, but he could guess the generous scorn that marked it.

"You, my best, my truest friend," she said—again she held out her hands to him, and he caught and clasped them close—love lent him sight—"do you think I shall ever forget what you and Cicely have been to me—against the world, as it were? But, oh, Nigel, what is to be done about this? And you know how she, Mrs. Scarlett, will talk. And"—once more she broke down—"oh, can you do nothing—nothing?" she cried feverishly. "Think—think! Am I to go mad with fear sitting here through all those terrible hours? And what will the morning bring?"

She dragged her hands out of his clasp, and began to pace wildly up and down, as if overcome by this last awful thought. "Nothing but ruin," she said at last, in a tone that meant only despair.

Despair too was his. He drew back a little out of her way, and, as he did so, his eyes fell upon his gun.

He ran to it quickly, and loaded it, and through one of the openings fired off, with only a short time between them, the two cartridges that remained to him. It was a last resource, and he wished to Heaven he had thought of it before.

Better late however than never—so he tried to think; but, as time went on, and no answering shout came from the woods, he began to believe they were indeed forsaken.

The storm still raged, but with a milder fury, and through a rent in the clouds a dull, pale, watery moon showed with a gloomy brilliance.

There was a sobbing still amongst the leafless trees, as though it rained; and, though the lightning indeed was dead, the whole earth seemed to groan as if beneath a heavy load.

Marvel's thoughts had flown to her husband.

Careless, indifferent as he was, devoted as she believed him to be to another woman, she had still in the earlier moments of her incarceration firmly believed in his ability, no less than his willingness, to come to her rescue; but now she believed in nothing.

All hope had gone from her, and she waited in a deadly silence for the passage of a time that should end only with her awakening to a knowledge that a reputation unsullied was no longer hers.

Innocent those who knew her best would undoubtedly deem her; but those others? And to be talked about—to be glanced at with a smile, half severe, that she had seen so often directed at others! No, she could not outlive that.

It was all past bearing indeed, but the bitterest thing was that he—Fulke—had not so far troubled himself as to come to her succor.

Perhaps he hoped for a deliverance that might arise out of this luckless night. She grew cold and shivered as she let this evil idea take possession of her.

How earnestly she had prayed at one time to have her miserable marriage set aside; and yet now, when the chance came, how she shrank from it.

How she cowered there in the darkness against the ice-cold wall, and pressed her hands against her frozen face, and entreated, with a fervour she had never yet known, that she might be saved from the horrible fate that seemed to hang over her.

She pictured them all to herself sitting in the cosy firelit room, drinking their tea and wondering with prettily-uplifted brows where she and Nigel Savage could be.

She could hear Mrs. Scarlett's low satirical little speech, could see Cicely's angry flush and glance of embarrassment—Cicely, who had always hinted that Nigel loved her with a passion undue and undesirable.

She could see too how Fulke sat beside Mrs. Scarlett in the flickering light of the fire and whispered to her, and glanced into her eyes, and, so glancing, forgot that she, his wife, was here, imprisoned, desperate, beyond all hope.

A hand touched hers in the darkness, two lips were pressed upon it. She felt by the intensity of the pressure that it was a farewell; but she seemed hardly to care enough for anything to demand an explanation.

Through the opening in the wall near her a ray of sullen moonlight entered which enabled her to see Nigel walk across the room to the window at the other side.

It was plain that he had at last decided on dropping from the window.

She knew that a lingering death would be the result of this, and, rising quickly from her seat, she went to him.

"You will kill yourself, and it will be of no use!" she said.

"I see no reason why I should be killed," said he, lying. "I may break an arm, a leg; but, even if——"

"It will be no good, I tell you," said she, in the same low, calm, hopeless tone. "They would not believe. No: risk nothing in so forlorn a cause. I was born to misfortune—I must fulfill my destiny."

"Such talk is only morbid folly," said he sharply; "you should not encourage it. Unhappy as you may be now, there is always hope in the future."

"In the immediate future, I think not," said she, with a calmness that betrayed the depth of her misery. "I have a presentiment that no one will come to release us—that no one cares to come." Her voice quivered. "That is it," she repeated mournfully—"no one cares."

Almost as the last word left her lips a shout reached them—a shout that rang through the stormy wind without. As they stood trembling, uncertain, it came again, clear and full of anxiety: it sounded nearer this time, and nearer still the next and the next, as it rose incessantly. Savage answered it with all his might, whilst Marvel stood rigid, frightened, yet full of a wild hope.

Suddenly it ceased—that glad sound from without—and both their hearts sank once more.

Were they, when help seemed so near, to be again plunged in an ocean of despair?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

STOLEN SECRETS.—Few inventions are at present worked secretly, as the patent laws now provide the protection which in olden times was wanting. One hundred years ago whatever a man discovered in the arts or mechanics he concealed. Workmen were put upon their oath never to reveal the processes used by their employers.

Doors were kept closed, artisans going out were searched, visitors were vigorously excluded from admission, and false operations blinded the workmen themselves. The mysteries of every craft were hedged in by precautions which now appear to be fanciful and silly.

But neither locks nor oaths availed against the ingenuity of curious or inquisitive rivals. One after another trade secrets were revealed, until the wise patent laws did away with all necessity for secrecy. The secret of the manufacture of citric acid was stolen from an old chemist, who had a shop near Temple Bar, in London, by a chimney sweep, who dropped down the flue and took good note of the process.

The secret of the manufacture of tinware, which was discovered in Holland, and kept a secret for fifty years, was stolen by James Sherman, a Cornish miner.

The history of cast steel presents a curious instance of a manufacturing secret stealthily obtained under the cloak of an appeal to philanthropy.

In 1760 a Sheffield (England) watchmaker became dissatisfied with the watch-springs in use, and after many experiments succeeded in making cast-steel. In 1770 he had a large factory making this steel. The process was wrapped in secrecy by every means within reach; true and faithful men hired, the work divided and subdivided, large wages paid, and stringent oaths administered.

It did not answer. One mid-winter night a traveller knocked at the gate. It was bitterly cold, the snow fell fast, and the kind foreman gave the wanderer shelter from the storm.

He sank upon the floor, and soon appeared to be asleep. But in reality he kept his eyes open, saw the whole process, and when he departed in the morning he carried with him the secret of making cast-steel.

A LITTLE boy bruised his head quite severely one day, and as a reward for his heroic behavior was given some of the fancy crackers that come in the shape of animals, a rare treat for him. After finishing them he went deliberately to the wall, bumped his head against it with considerable force several times, then turned around with the remark: "More grackers."

IN MY DREAMS.

BY J. CARSELL.

I have not seen his face for years,
Nor heard the sweet tones of his voice,
Save in my dreams;
They bring a whispered word that cheers,
Visions that make my heart rejoice—
Thank God for dreams.

For nevermore upon this earth
Shall I behold his countenance,
Save in my dreams;
And I shall never cease to bless,
And with my whole heart's gratefulness,
Thank God for dreams.

"The Milky Way."

BY S. E. W.

CHAPTER II.

THENCEFORTH he had become her hero, and while Lady Georgina was saying to herself, in her supposed worldly wisdom, that it was of no use her and her husband's ever giving a thought to young Dovercourt, for that Sybil, dutiful and obedient as she was, would be certain to turn from his ugly face; and that, so surely as she did so, Henry would give in, and she herself would give in (seeing that Sybil's happiness was to them all in all)—while the poor creature, who, after all, was a mother and an affectionate one, was telling herself this with a sigh—what was Miss Sybil about, but wondering, and pondering, and peering out from under her long lashes to see what had become of this very Sir Robert, and questioning more and more whether he was in his turn ever giving a thought to her?

Once she had been nearly sure that he liked her, that he liked her better than other people did, understood her more than they did—and—and—even admired her just a little, and looked at her just now and then; but, for some months preceding the birthday party, the young man had been absent from the neighborhood, and the news that he had not only been invited, but had accepted his invitation, gave her heart almost a shock.

Then had followed the intimation that, at her aunt's suggestion (for the first time, Lady Diana's interference in a programme of their own had been graciously received by the prickly couple)—"at her aunt's suggestion" had been repeated by both—it had been settled that she was to be taken in to dinner by the bachelor baronet.

Sybil had not said a word. But she had looked, as she had felt, happy; so happy, indeed, that Lady Georgina, ever on the watch for any change of color or turn of feature, had suddenly paused, drawn a long breath, and gazed wistfully into her daughter's face.

Did it strike her that the time had come when even that limpid surface might not reveal all that lay in the depths beneath?

At any rate the name of Sir Robert Dovercourt did not again rise to her lips, and presently she reverted to other matters connected with the all-important matter on hand.

For such an august occasion Sybil was to have a really smart new dress.

It could not, of course, be cut, as was the prevailing mode, low in the neck and short in the sleeve, and there must still be this and that hygienic precaution observed in the making; but still it was to be very pretty, it was to be fashionable, and it was to be made by a first-class London dressmaker.

In this last lay the youthful debutante's chief source of satisfaction and comfort.

No really first-class potentate, such as Lady Georgina named, would, for her own sake, turn out a birthday dress for a young lady of eighteen that was not by means of art and skill worthy of her reputation.

The tailors had, she knew, demurred to her coats, and had only been prevailed upon to yield on the plea that for a little girl, a mere schoolroom miss, appearance could not signify, health must be everything.

Hints had, however, been dropped that even in her parents' eyes appearance was now to a certain extent to be held of consequence, and Sybil trod on air.

At last, she was to be as others were, wear what they wore, and turn and step about without that terrible consciousness of being followed by curious and derisive glances, which had permeated her life hitherto.

At last—perhaps, at last—one pair of eyes might look not only on her, but on her trappings, with all the ignorant but delightful homage of a man.

Sir Robert, her old friend Sir Robert, should see that poor little Sybil could be fine for once.

How fast flew Sybil's feet up the broad oaken staircase when one bright frosty morning it was announced that the box—the box of boxes — had arrived from town.

It had been taken to her dressing-room, she was informed, where it was already being opened; she waited to hear no more.

The lid was off, in spite of her haste, ere she was at the door, and the first sight that met her enraptured vision was that of glossy folds of white satin festooned over with silvery veilings and wreaths and trails of shining blossoms, being drawn forth from rustling depths—a dream of beauty never to be forgotten.

Sybil stood still and clasped her hands tightly.

Never had she beheld anything more pure and exquisite—and it was to be for her.

A sigh of ecstasy escaped, a soft murmur burst from her parted lips. And then, to be sure, the fairy robe itself was not all.

There were besides tiny, sparkling, beaded, white satin slippers, such slippers as Cinderella's prince might himself have fallen in love with; and there were a pair of the longest, softest, most delicately perfumed gloves, gloves that would certainly reach to Sybil's elbow, if not beyond; and best, because least expected of all—for Lady Georgina's orders had been lavish, but had for this occasion been entrusted to one person only—something still longer than the gloves, still softer, still more dainty; something that unrolled and unrolled, and grew more and more bewitching with every turn, until finally resolved into the most beautifully embroidered silken stockings that heart of maiden could desire, with, oh! joy of joys, no hidden horrors, no discomforting secrets thereto attached.

Her cup ran over. It seemed as if all at once every thorn had been extracted from her roses.

If the first view were ravishing, the next step was still more enchantingly novel and important.

The whole contents of the box must be tried on without delay; two attendants lent their aid, Lady Georgina, eyeglass in hand, looked on, and only the young lady's now acknowledged young-ladyhood prevented the worthy Colonel's being present also.

As it was, he hung about in readiness to confer on any debatable point, or to pronounce upon the whole.

"Are you sure they fit? Do they quite fit?" earnestly demanded the mother, as the small feet in their wondrous new casings were displayed before her. "Sybil, my precious, do not scruple to tell me exactly how they feel. Are they easy? Are they comfortable? Not too tight anywhere? Not too high in the heel, nor too low in the instep, nor too narrow across the toes? Do they pinch you in the slightest? Do they hurt anywhere? Say if they do at once, my love; they can be sent back, and fresh ones ordered if——"

"They are very nice indeed, thank you, mamma."

Sybil's young face was aglow all over.

"They look very nice certainly, but still if they are not comfortable——"

"Indeed, mamma, they could not be more comfortable."

"And the patience the bit thing has wi' a' her mamma's fidgets and fancies, and her no bein satisfyed with nacthin, is a sicht to see," cried old nurse, Scotch to the backbone, in her heart at this. "Puir bit cratur! she canna be let be e'en aboot a best goon for the birthday, but it maun be 'Sybil, my bonnie, it's bound to pinch ye some gait.' Aweel, her mamma means nae ill, but the folks is few and far atween that could thole it!"

Sybil was now being arrayed in the satin folds.

"Charming!" cried Lady Georgina, for once caught in a womanly snare. "Charming!" and for a full minute she said nothing more.

But all too soon anxiety was at work again, and over and over again had it to be repeated that every detail was as it should be, that the waist was not too long, nor the collar too high, nor the sleeves too tight.

Was the skirt at least not rather narrow? Could Sybil move, and breathe, and recline, at ease?

Would she run no risk of tripping over her lace in front, or of being entangled in the train behind? Would those high-heeled slippers——

But here Lady Georgina actually brought herself to a stand-still, and dangled the eyeglass nervously from her white hand.

Now the truth was that 'heels' were not only here but Colonel Latimer's inveterate and openly proclaimed aversion, and long and loudly had they waged war with them on Sybil's behalf.

"Manacles, distortions, deformities," had been the Colonel's cry.

Were it once to come to his knowledge that any living creature had dared to attach to the feet of his precious child, or rather to her shoes, their obnoxious component part, speech would not have sufficed for his wrath, and no power on earth would have prevented his sending back the pretty, shining, sparkling little apples of discord without delay of an instant.

But Lady Georgina was not a man, nor a soldier.

She looked at her daughter, and, as we have said, suggestion and inquiry alike melted away. She could not do it.

Of Sybil's own innocent delight, of her pride in displaying her small self so transformed and illuminated to the sympathetic household, of the secret hopes to which the present hour gave rise within her modest bosom, fluttering and thrilling like that of a frightened bird beneath its unwonted sensations, we must not now pause to speak.

Suffice it to say that all went well, and the day of the dinner party drew on.

Of this in itself the young girl had no dread. By nature Sybil was fond of society, easily pleased, readily amused, and disposed to believe that the most of those she met were as kind, and good-humored, and benevolent, as they appeared to be.

People were always kind to her; and from having been so much in the company of her elders, the current topics of the day were neither found to be devoid of interest nor above her comprehension; nor would she have shrunk from being questioned and appealed to, had she been allowed to reply without being descanted upon, and dissected piece by piece.

Might she but have talked as others talked—but why hark back to the old grievance?

There was one person at least with whom Sybil Latimer was never miserable, never upon the tenter-hooks, and with him—a sigh of satisfaction escaped whenever she thought of it—with him she was to pass the greater part of the eventful evening.

Accordingly there remained one subject for conjecture and anxiety now to feed upon, only one terror had still at times the power to keep sweet slumber from her eyelids.

That haunting spectre was—a tumbler of milk.

Every evening at eight o'clock, when Sybil sat down to make her usual light and easily digested supper during her parents' more solid and protracted meal, a tumbler of milk would be placed at her right hand, and it was one of the laws of the Medes and Persians in the old Colonel's household that for no reason and under no circumstances was that tumbler of milk ever to be omitted.

In his eyes the nutritious draught was the chief support, the very backbone as it were, of Sybil's fragile existence, and for this reason it had long been one of her worst enemies.

In vain had Lady Diana urged that milk, in conjunction with other food, was by no means the harmless and healthful diet he supposed.

His hand had been raised on the instant, and his tone had been heightened also, as he had declaimed and expounded, with invariably the same result—incredulity and a shrug of the shoulders on her part, renewed and inflamed obstinacy on his.

In other respects the meal had been, after infinite deliberation and debate, advanced with advancing years; so that, from the earlier plate of rusks and butter, it had now been turned into a minute helping of fish, with perhaps a potato in gravy to follow (neither soup nor meat was supposed to suit), but whatever there was or was not, the one thing needful, in the eyes of those who had not themselves to drink it, was the tumbler of milk, and the reason for its being so, with all the usual additional explanations and discussions, was given once more to anybody present who inadvertently laid himself or herself open to receive them.

The point now was, would that ghostly tumbler appear to confront and overwhelm poor happy Sybil on this one glorious evening of her hitherto sunless life?

She dared not inquire, had not the courage to awaken memories that might be dormant on the subject. The risk was too great.

Supposing, just supposing, that silence might mean a tacit consent to the absence just for once of the degrading relic of the nursery, would she not have herself to thank, if by any ill-timed inquisitiveness she were to bring down evil on her own head?

Provided a discreet reserve were maintained on the other hand, it was quite on the cards that Barlington—Barlington, who was the soul of propriety and as severe an upholder of etiquette as his mistress herself—would take it upon himself to forget.

George and Thomas, the two underlings, would take their cue as in duty bound from their leader, and consider it impossible that anything so homely could appear at the gorgeous banquet.

Could she but have hoped that her parents would have shared the feeling? Any such hope, however, at least with regard to the lynx-eyed Colonel, was vain as vain could be; it all depended on his remembering and not perceiving. But what a thread to hang upon.

As the hour drew nearer the matter loomed more important.

At first it had been one of many cares, an anxiety amid numerous anxieties, but as these gradually subsided and at length there had remained only the dreaded tumbler of milk and nothing besides, it attained a magnitude which not unnaturally dwarfed the lesser sources of gratification.

Then came listening, watching, and straining to discover, if possible, whether or no everything had been said, any order given.

She did not think so. She could not find any sign of its having been the theme of remark in any way.

On the afternoon of the party fortune favored her yet the more; she was able to slip unperceived into the dining-room, all decked out and almost complete for the evening, and one hasty glance at the place which she knew had been prepared for herself sufficed to show the now joyous and triumphant little maid that no tumbler of milk was expected there.

Her glasses—one, two, three—were duly placed and arranged like those of other people.

She asked no more. Oh, the joy of robing and trimming, of alternately dallying and hurrying over her toilette as eight o'clock approached.

How early did Sybil repair to her room, and how fondly did she stroke and smooth the satin, hold the trailing garlands up to view, peep at the fairy slippers, stretch and powder and uncover the many buttons of the long gloves.

Ready long before she really need have been, there was every minute something to alter, to rearrange, to improve.

Now it was an ornament here, now a riband there, now a buckle to be adjusted, now a lock of hair to be fastened.

"Come, my love;" Lady Georgina herself is at the door. "Come and enter the drawing-room with me, and—and—and—God bless you, my darling!" whispered the poor fond mother, with the water rising to her eyes. For once she had not a single fault to find.

For once Sybil neither shrank nor shrivelled beneath the eyes turned upon her as she walked up the great saloon.

Sir Robert Dovercourt was already there—she was glad he was there. He looked at her—she was glad he should look. He spoke to her—and she was proud to be spoken to.

"Looks really well for once, does she not?" whispered Lady Diana, on the alert as ever; "looks as she ought to do, and not as she ever does do—or at least has done before. Now" (this was all to Sir Robert, who stood near), "now, you remember what I told you. Oh, don't stand staring at Sybil, Sir Robert; we can all see that she is a new creature in that nice new dress, but have your wits about you. Don't allow this chance to pass. Listen; if you find that your partner is to sit close to either parent, just get into a wrong place and don't be got out of it."

Sir Robert's honest face flushed up with humor and comprehension. She saw she could depend upon him.

Then the move to the dining-room began, and he made for Sybil's side.

"I am to have you to myself, Sybil. That is jolly."

"Oh, yes;" quite ready to assent.

"Did you know before me?"

"Oh, yes."

Sybil always spoke the simple truth.

"How did you know?" proceeded he, however. "You had no business to know. Now, supposing you had wanted to have some one else?"

"Well?"

"You would have made your mother throw me over."

"Oh, no," said Sybil earnestly.

"Oh, yes, you would."

"Indeed I should not; I never should have thought of doing so."

"Why not?"

"Why, I never ask mamma anything;" and the house of cards on which he had begun to build fell over on the instant.

"Oh," said Sir Robert, showing in his tone something of this; "oh, I had hoped, but no matter. I see how it is. Your mother arranged it all, and you had no voice. Girls do have a voice in such matters sometimes, don't they?"

He sighed, and shot a side glance. At the same moment his well-tutored eyes discerned that if his place were on the left hand of Lady Georgina, at least he was not obliged to know as much. The places were not named.

"I think we might sit here;" and the sturdy baronet seized the back of a chair almost in the middle of the table. "Eh? What!" as a footman officiously hurried forward to correct the mistake. "Eh? Oh, we shall do very well here. No, never mind; we'll stop where we are, thank you," in decided accents, and Lady Diana's laughing eyes applauded the speaker from the opposite side.

"Delightful!" thought Sybil, "delightful!" "Now," pondered she presently, "now I am quite safe, even from the tumbler of milk. Papa cannot see me at all, and mamma is not likely to be watching. If mamma were but in her place——"

And the next moment Lady Georgina was in her place.

A momentary hesitation, a disturbed glance as she beheld what had happened, but that was all.

Lady Georgina Latimer was far too well-mannered a woman to cause a scuffle at her own board and among her own guests; there had been a blunder, but she could not help it; if young Dovercourt had been stupid enough to mistake his instructions, he must take the consequences; he had been told where he was to go, and he ought to have done as he was bid; she could not pull about her dinner-table in order to give him his proper precedence, and so he must be shown; he must now sit where he was, and he would know better another time.

Apparently Sir Robert was content in his disgrace.

His broad, red, healthy, jolly face had never looked more replete with satisfaction and good humor.

It was an ugly face—an ugly face according to commonly accepted canons—but somehow it was one that everybody liked and that no one was ever very sorry to see.

More than one among the ladies present would cheerfully have exchanged the elegant, faultlessly attired youth at her side for Sybil's rough-and-ready partner, who was too much of a man, and too big a man altogether, to give his clothes, or his manners, or himself in any way very much of his attention, and had in consequence the whole of it to bestow on his companion. It was well known that Sir Robert could afford to defy even Lady Georgina. Lucky Sybil!

Now Sybil felt her luck to the very bottom of her young heart. She was, it is true, almost a child, but she was almost a woman also.

The birthday party in itself, with all its attendant joys and immunities, would have satisfied the one half of her nature, but it was the other half which now experienced a keener, sweeter pleasure.

A woman's hopes and fears and flutter-

ings were beginning to stir within her breast, and she was conscious of an emotion other than she had ever known, and one before which all else paled and faded.

Formerly a kind word or look or merry confidence from her old friend had almost certainly been evoked by painful circumstances, or had been followed by some embittering element.

Even on the few occasions when it had not been so, when all had gone well, it had struck keenly home to the child's lonely heart that he, who was so much to her, probably scarce yielded more than a passing friendliness, a sort of compassionate goodwill, in return.

Of late, to be sure, Sir Robert had seemed to care a little more, to seek her out a little more, but never in his life had he looked at her as he did now.

And as for his talking to anyone else. Certainly he had on his other side the dullest dame in the county, and one whom even he could not awaken nor invigorate.

But still he should have tried, surely he should have tried.

Surely the poor lady should not have been allowed to wade through course after course with only the most perfunctory and interjectionary and spasmodic of observations from the gentlemen on either side of her.

As a rule she could have depended on Sir Robert Dovercourt, who had the character of being the kindest-hearted and least discriminating talker in the world—a young fellow so happy in himself that he brimmed over here, there, and everywhere, regardless on whom the sunbeams fell.

Was it possible that even Sir Robert could fail for once?

Sir Robert actually did. There he sat, talking, laughing, eating, telling good stories, cracking good jokes, and sipping good wine, the merriest of the merry, but with ne'er a thought of duty nor of conscience.

Poor woman, she never quite forgave him.

And she never but believed to her dying day that Sybil cast a glamor then and there over the simple young man, who otherwise would have given no more his heart——. But we anticipate.

Let us return to the tumbler of milk. It was, as we have said, absent, and, in Sybil's sweet eyes, conspicuous by its absence, even from the place which should have been hers.

She felt now doubly secure. There was no chance of Lady Georgina's being reminded, nor of Colonel Latimer's reminding himself.

The dinner was in full swing, and both were—must be fully engrossed. She need no longer dread her dream of bliss being rudely broken in upon.

She might give herself up to it unchecked, play the woman.

She would, indeed, content her appetite with a mere thimbleful of the delicious soup (Sybil was fond of soup), whose irrepressible odor issuing from the distant kitchen had assailed her nostrils throughout the day: she would also be on her honor in regard to the fish, decline the sauce, and avert her eyes from the tempting entrees.

All of this was nothing; to refrain from every delicacy in or out of season was nothing (indeed, she had of her own accord promised as much in rehearsal, overjoyed to do so, and thus foresee an exemption from outward reminders),—but now even desire to feast upon forbidden fruit was at an end, subdued by an all-powerful rival.

Sir Robert could eat and drink and make love all at once—for Sybil it was enough only to receive the last. She asked no more.

"All due to me," chuckled Lady Diana, from her vantage ground opposite; "all due to my poking up that dear, nice, stupid fellow, who is the very man for Sybil, but would have had no more wit to find it out for himself than to fly. Now he will go ahead as though he were in the huntingfield. He will never stop till he has run her in, as he would say. Oh, yes, I can see you doing it, Sir Robert; you have started now and are well off I should imagine, by your looks—and hers. Poor child, what a good time she is having! But what is the matter? What are people looking at? What is Sybil crimsoning at? Some folly of my senseless prig of a brother-in-law, I'll answer for it. Oh, but that is really too bad," and, in spite of her indignation, the lively lady gave way to mirth she could not restrain. "Oh, dear! oh, dear!" for Lady Diana had an acute sense of the ludicrous. "Oh, poor Sybil, poor Sybil! Ha! ha! ha! And, oh, dear! Sir Robert's face! Ha! ha! ha! And, oh, my goodness, what is Sybil going to do? Oh, that incurable idiot, Barlington, to go and present poor Sybil before us all with a great, horrid, invalidish tumbler of milk!"

Well might she say, "Why is Sybil going to do?"

Poor Sybil! One moment before, and she had never been so happy in her life. In her fancied security she had been prattling and jesting, and drinking in the exquisite draught of ardor unconcealed, with which Sir Robert's eyes and tongue at once presented her, bending her fair neck the better to give ear to the voice of her enchanter, expanding like a flower in the warmth, responding to the sunshine.

And now! It was only a tumbler of milk, but with it the serpent entered into Sybil Latimer's paradise.

That the blow should have fallen thus! That she should have been struck down just when she was treading the celestial heights, when she was inhaling the intoxicating incense, being lured to rapture by the bewitching music!—when, and oh, reader, deign to think that pitiful, and deign to pity—when she was at last free, unfettered, untortured, and at peace!

No word did Sybil speak. Words would have availed nothing; protests, entreaties, rebellion itself even, would now have been all too late; the deed had been done, the sight had been seen, the disgrace was inefaceable.

Full in the view of all, and uncomely even in the eyes of him who bore it, there was the large white tumbler on its shining tray, and in the accompany sentence, "By master's orders, miss," the hapless victim read her doom afresh.

It happened, moreover, that at the moment a silence fell upon the company, so that her own pale consternation, Sir Robert's mute, round-eyed amazement, and Lady Diana's "My goodness!" were lost upon nobody, and indeed directed to the one point the looks and intelligence of such as might otherwise have been engaged.

"There is your milk, Sybil."

Like a dim echo came her father's voice from the bottom of the table. Sybil almost shuddered.

"There is your milk," repeated he; and then, horror of horrors, she heard, she was sure she heard, the "Sybil suffers so much from etc., etc.," which was the inevitable prelude to revelations and confidences.

Of all things Colonel Latimer piqued himself upon being a judicious and thoughtful parent; the present opportunity for proving himself to be one had been delivered in a tone that had admitted of no remonstrance.

He was now explaining his theory on the subject to the matrons on either side.

But Sybil, what belief her? How did she comport herself? How did she endure the luckless moment?

"Milk, by Jove!" cried a laughing voice in her ear. "Milk, I declare! Is it for you, Sybil? Is that your fancy?" (her fancy, poor child!) "Well, upon my word, it is a splendid idea," pursued Sir Robert, talking comfortably away; "looks jolly, and tastes first-rate, I'll answer for it. I never heard of anybody's taking milk at dinner before. I am sure I don't know why they shouldn't though, if they like it; I daresay it tastes uncommonly nice; I——"

But here the good-humored young voice suddenly died away, the blue eyes dropped, and over the speaker's frank open face a queer look stole.

"By Jove!" he might have been heard to whisper to himself beneath his breath. For all down Sybil's scarlet cheeks the tears were streaming.

Of course she should have helped it; of course you and I would have helped it; we would have sunk into the earth, given up the ghost upon the spot, rather than have committed such a terrible, irremediable offence against les convenances; but perhaps, on the other hand, we have not had our spirit subdued and our strength broken by years of tutelage amounting to martyrdom, and we have not been, as it were, caught, and caged, and thrust back into our prison again, just when we had spread our wings in one rapturous first flight beyond.

This was what had happened to my poor little heroine, and beneath the stroke she sank her head and wept.

"Oh, my goodness! my goodness! my goodness!"

Lady Diana's laugh from very horror froze upon her lips. She was no great hand at propriety herself, but this went altogether beyond her.

"Oh, my goodness! that child has done for herself now, at all events," muttered she, as grave as a judge. "Who would have believed Sybil did not know better? Well, my good sister and brother, you have only yourselves to thank for this. I hope you like it. All I can say is, I am thankful it is no child of mine who is making such an exhibition of herself. It will be the talk of the neighborhood, and everyone will say they have weakened the girl's intellect with their folly. Oh, Sybil, for goodness sake stop!" continued she, almost aloud. "It is too dreadful, and Sir Robert ——"

But she raised her eyes at the moment, and forgot to finish the sentence. Sir Robert had taken possession of the milk.

"Sybil?"

No answer.

"Sybil," said he again. A low sob. Then a faint "Yes?"

"You do not want this, and I do," pursued the speaker, softly; "let me keep it;" for she had put out her hand. "I want to take it from you, I want your leave to drink it for you; but"—(everyone else was now talking very fast, and Lady Diana's voice rose above the rest in her gayest, liveliest accents)—"but," continued the young man, dropping his own tones lower and lower till even the one ear for which they were designed could scarcely catch them, "but it would be too great an honor; I have no right to ask it, I have no claim to put myself forward as your knight, unless" ——(the talking around was still loud, fast, and furious)—"unless," murmured Sybil's companion very low, "you will yourself give me the right. Sybil, dear Sybil may I do this, and everything else for you from this time? May I——," and he stopped, and held the glass of milk in his hand, gazing into her face. "Do you understand?" he said.

Understand? Her very heart was bursting.

"I want to fight all your battles for you, to take all your troubles on my shoulders; to care for you, and have you for my own," fumbled good Sir Robert, not knowing very well in what words to put the feeling with which his great chest was heaving, but no whit reluctant nor embarrassed either. "Only say one word, won't you? Because, you see, I must have one word, or else—— Oh, then, never mind about it," for the chances of obtaining what he sought were obviously small, and it became prudent not to press the point. "No, never mind," he went on, "I ought not to have spoken now, only—only that I can't help it. And if you will just—I say, I may drink it, may I? No, don't look up and down the table; neither your father nor your mother has anything to do with this, no one has anything to do with this, except you, yourself. You, and only you must give me my answer, Sybil. I won't take it from anyone else. I only ask for a sign, or a look. I shall know what you mean, and you will know what I mean. It is between ourselves. But if I am allowed to drink this—am I to be allowed? . . . Sybil?" . . . Again he paused, and there was no evading nor misteking that pause.

"Sybil?"

Her head bent lower.

"Is it to be 'Yes?' he whispered.

"Yes."

Sir Robert raised his face, and fronted the assembled guests triumphantly.

"Something has happened," cried Lady Diana to herself. "Something has surely happened. He's in earnest. I swear he is in earnest. He has got that wretched milk in his hand, and—good heavens! he looks as though he were going to drink it!"

He drank it to the last drop.

"And now," he cried exultingly; "and now?"

She had no words, but neither did he need them.

One moment his hand sought hers beneath the table, and he knew that henceforth she would refuse him nothing.

And Sir Robert maintained afterwards, and maintains to this day, that it was the tumbler of milk that did it all.

"For, by Jove! I had always thought Sybil was an uncommonly nice girl, you know," he averred joyously; "I was struck all of a heap by her when she came in that evening, all dressed out so beautifully, you know. But then, that was one thing, and falling in love was another, you know. I don't know—mind you, I only say I don't know that I had exactly thought about falling in love with Sybil just then. Of course I should have done it sooner or later; I couldn't have helped myself; but if it had not been for that tumbler of milk—by Jove! I am glad I have not to drink such beastly stuff every day—though to be sure I did not grudge drinking it, and I would do it again for Sybil any time—of course I would. Only I hope to goodness never to see poor Sybil in such a plight again. I can hardly think of it now. I felt as if I could have murdered somebody. That poor child! But I tell you what, she is never going to cry any more, she has promised me that. Bless you, she is as happy as the day is long, now. And she tells me everything, that she does. I know how to get it out of her in spite of all her saying 'I am afraid I ought not to tell you,' and that sort of thing. That is all nonsense. If I am to be her husband, I shall have to hear it some time, so I may as well begin at once. 'Tis as good as a play. I know all about the coddling and the fussing, and the queer coats and hats, and the old nurse sitting up in the next room till after she is asleep at night—oh, by Jove, the whole thing is delicious. Take care of her? Of course I'll take care of her, but it will be in another way, mind you. It shan't be by making her blush up before everybody, and nipping her in the bud at every turn. It shan't be by treating her like something between a fool and a baby. I know what I'm about. Why, Sybil is a new creature already, and as for her parents——"

He gulped down the comment in his throat.

"Oh, it's all right, of course," he concluded cheerfully; "they are very good sort of people, and we shall get on first-rate. I bear them no grudge, nor yet does Sybil, for that—that—that tumbler of milk."

[THE END.]

TRUE EXERCISE.—When we talk about exercise, we are very apt to forget that it is a many-sided word. We use it as if it referred merely to the movement of the muscles. It is necessary to health that all our powers should be exercised, and the continued disuse of any of them results in its partial or total loss. If anyone should lie in bed for years, without the slightest ailment, one would lose the use of his limbs; and this is equally true of quite different faculties. All our powers grow by use.

We lose our faculty—what artists call our "touch"—by neglect of practice on other things besides the piano. The man who seldom reads, reads slowly; the woman whose writing is confined to an unfrequent letter to some absent child, spends more time over that than does a practiced writer over a dozen pages of manuscript. In the realm of the emotions it is the same. Benevolence is largely a matter of habit. So is affection, self-control, gentleness. If, then, exercise, in its largest sense, is of so great consequence, we at once see the importance of apportioning it to our own personal deeds.

THE round of a passionate man's life is in contracting debts in his passion, which his virtue obliges him to pay. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation.

Scientific and Useful.

SMOKE.—A Vienna engineer has just taken out a patent for a new smoke-roasting process. By means of electricity he proposes to condense the solid part of the smoke as it arises from the coal, the carbon thus formed falling back into the furnace.

HUMMING WIRES.—Telegraph and telephone wires on housetops sometimes cause a disagreeable humming, and it may be useful to know that the noise can be easily and simply stopped by a short length of India-rubber tubing fitted on the wire at its attachment.

SUBSTITUTE FOR WOOD.—It appears that special attention is being paid in France and England to a more general substitution of iron and steel for wood, wherever practicable, in manufactured articles, such, for instance, as building materials, boxes and packing cases, barrels or casks, carriages, carts, and other vehicles, furniture, fencing, railway work, sheds, signal boxes, telegraph poles, etc. In France there have recently come into use hollow iron window frames and doors, which are said to be light and strong, and of far greater durability than could ever be assumed of wood. There is no reason, too, it is thought, why corrugated barrels of iron or steel should not be used for liquors, since milk and preserved fruits and other articles are kept in cans. Steel is finding much favor among carriage builders, but there is still much prejudice against the metal being used in the manufacture of furniture.

BRICK AND TAR.—The coating of brick and wooden structures with tar, as a rough and ready means of preserving them from the action of damp, has been common from the earliest days of the gas industry. It has also been usual in chemical works to protect the stones used in the construction of the acid tanks, etc., by a preliminary soaking in heated tar. But the great improvement in strength and impermeability to moisture which results from the simple operation of boiling bricks and stones in gas tar is certainly not so generally known as it should be. The author of the work, "Coal Tar and Ammonia," draws attention to the subject, and indicates several useful applications. He points out that draining and roofing tiles, which are quite porous and brittle as they leave the kiln, may be rendered absolutely water-tight and much stronger by an immersion in a bath of hot tar. Building stones are greatly improved by similar treatment; and for many purposes the dead black color which results is an advantage rather than an objection. The tar should be deprived of water and its most volatile oils; and to produce good results the bath must be maintained at a temperature of at least 100°. The articles to be treated should be thoroughly dried, and allowed to remain in the tar for some time.

Farm and Garden.

CURED MUTTON.—Mutton may be cured and smoked in the same manner as venison, and it is considered nearly equal to venison by those who have eaten it.

STOCK AND WATER.—When stock is turned on the pasture and there left all day, the water supply must be looked after. A milch cow must have plenty of water. She cannot wait until she is driven up at night. The water is a necessary constituent of the milk, and she must have it during the time the milk is being manufactured. If deprived of water during the warm days her supply of milk will fall off.

THE SHEEP.—It is important that the sheep sheds be well supplied with racks and feed troughs, so that the sheep will not crowd each other in their endeavor to get their share of feed. Often the smaller and weaker ones are crowded away entirely and get no grain and only the refuse hay. Abundance of room should be given so that each animal may eat its fill at its leisure and without crowding.

KICKERS.—It is said that the following experiment will cure a horse of kicking. Put the animal into a narrow stall that has both sides thickly padded. Suspend a sack filled with hay or straw so that it will strike his heels, and let horse and sack fight it out. Be sure to have things arranged so that the horse cannot hurt himself. The sack will be victorious every time, and in the end the horse will absolutely refuse to kick the sack or anything else.

AGENTS FOR STOCK.—In Minnesota a State law compels all agents for trees and nursery stock to have in their possession a certificate setting forth the name, occupation, and residence of their principals, and a statement as to where stock is grown, together with a bond in the sum of $2000, to save any citizen of the State who should be defrauded by any false or fraudulent representations in any manner. Any agent refusing to comply as above would be liable to fine and imprisonment.

DANDELIONS.—A correspondent states that dandelions in pasture form valuable food for cattle, and especially for dairy cows. Some years ago he had two fields, one with few and the other with a great many dandelions. It was found when the cows were put on the field with many of these plants their yield of milk was improved both in quality and quantity. Since then he has planted dandelions in fields laid down in grass in order to improve the pasture, and the effect has been decidedly beneficial.

Good nature should lead the list of the virtues.

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An Interest In Life.

Half the illnesses and more than half the unhappiness in life come from the want of some active outside interest—something to take the person out of himself; chiefly, though, out of herself.

The spiritual barrenness of egotism and of idleness makes life a very desert, where no green thing flourishes, which no dew from heaven refreshes, nor living water rejoices. Self-centred and uninterested, life to such a one is but a poor entertainment for the senses; and the deeper emotions and affections have no share therein.

The order of the day, with all its necessary circumstances of food, and gradual wearing of the morning through the noon to evening, and the sleep, which is only the culmination of the lethargy of the waking hours—is one long round of weariness and dissatisfaction.

Like withered boughs which bear no roses, not an hour has its moment of delight—not an action has its hope of joy or fulfilment of pleasure. The dull day creeps sluggishly from dawn to close, and not a new thought has been awakened nor a new sensation aroused.

Marion in the "Moated Grange" was not more dreary than the man or woman who has no outside interest, and whose life is bound up in self; and no prisoner ever hailed the free air of heaven with more rapturous gratitude than would such a one if set in the way to make that interest and enlarge those boundaries. For we must never forget that many things which look like faults, and pass under the name of faults, are in reality misfortunes—the results of conditions made for us and not by us, and not to be broken by such energy as we possess.

In this one word, indeed, lies the heart of the matter. With energy we make an interest for ourselves, in spite of the poverty of our circumstances. Without it, opportunities pass by unutilized, and we let slip all chances for bettering our fate.

It is a misfortune to be born one of the passive, the negative, the unenergetic, who divide the world with the active and energetic.

Most things in life that are worth having at all have to be sought and pursued, if they are to be captured and held fast. Neither Fortune nor Pleasure knocks persistently at any man's door, but each has to be at the least looked for up and down the street, and invited in if it is desired to entertain either.

But the unenergetic take no pains to find these radiant guests. If they do not come unbidden they do not come at all; and the flowers and gems borne by the sluggish stream on its bosom are let to drift into the great ocean of things now impossible, because of the want of energy to seize them as they passed.

The energetic, on the contrary, are of those who improve their holding.

No matter what the interest so long as we make one for ourselves. From art to religion, and from philanthropy to needlework, all is useful, if some forms are purer and nobler than others.

Many people do very bad art—paint pictures that are caricatures; sing in voices to which tin kettles are as silver bells; write books, innocent of the very elements of composition—but all the same they have an interest which has lifted them out of the deadly dulness of the past.

If they have no higher vocation, and their powers are not capable of attaining greater results, it is better for them to use them on these lower levels than not at all; and the world benefits, at least in so far that they are thereby made happier—with the consequent result of greater happiness radiated on to others. If they are well endowed they do good work in itself, and the world is richer by the achievement.

Study of a true kind, combined with thought and action, makes a full mind and gives a rich inheritance for all time.

It is not enough to know only the outside circumstances connected with that tomb, that church, that ruin. Were we thoroughly in earnest and really desirous to bring a grand interest into our life, we should read with more direct intent—digging down to the philosophic germ as well as plucking the pictorial flower—getting at the historic substratum as well as the dramatic event. This applies to home reading, where we have so little real purpose save when compelled by professional necessity.

Yet those who want an interest in life can always find it by studying for some definite object. If they did, by the way, the novel publishers' trade would be sensibly diminished, and the novel writers themselves reduced by more than half for want of readers; which would not be an unmitigated evil, all things considered.

But even reading, one of the most important things to our mental life, we manage to make futile by want of purpose and concentration, and to deprive it of the real interest it would otherwise have.

In any case we come to the true meaning of these lines. We can if we will make an interest in life for ourselves, supposing that none exists in our original circumstances. We can study for the improvement of our minds and the enrichment of our knowledge; or we can do good to those who need help—good to the poor or to the sick, to the lonely or to the sorrowful. We can exercise ourselves in some form of art, be it playing on the piano with only one finger till we arrive at the dignity of being able to play with two; or we can enter into the way of religion by some one of the many doors which stand open. If we have money we can travel; if we have not we can find our place at home.

No person is doomed to this kind of atrophy of condition who has energy enough to rise out of his circumstances and break the unseen bands which bind him. No one need be without an interest while there is a human soul to love or a body to comfort, a new fact to learn or a new beauty to admire.

When I myself, says an old philosopher, had twice or thrice made a resolute resistance unto anger, the like befell me that did the Thebans; who, having once foiled the Lacedæmonians (who before that time had held themselves invincible), never after lost so much as one battle which they fought against them.

It is the wisest not to plan for one's life too far ahead. There are those who live largely in the future, and sometimes exhibit almost as much particularity of care in shaping the details of some possible distant experience as if it were close at hand. To plan ahead thus is as foolish as it is not to reflect at all about what is coming. The course of events may take such a turn, long before the anticipated experience occurs, as wholly to alter the necessities of the case, and then all time and pains which have been spent are found to have been wasted. Foresight is commendable, but, like most other good things, it easily may be exaggerated into an evil. Those who live so much in the uncertain future also are in danger of being depressed by possibilities of unhappiness which may never be realized, but the fear of which is enough to render one timid and morbid. Let us do faithfully the duties of the present, and, as the rule, leave the future to unfold itself, as God may ordain, except when, as in the case of the immediate future, it is plainly important that we should plan.

Every man is the stronger for knowing the worst he can know about himself, and for acting on this knowledge. And if religious men such as David and St. Paul use language about themselves which seems to any of us exaggerated in the excess of its self-depreciation, this is because they saw much more of the holiness of God and of the real nature of moral evil than we do. To them such language is only the sober representation of a plain fact. These great servants of God were not dazzled by any of the inherited or acquired decorations which hide from so many of us our real selves.

Learning doth invest us with grand and glorious privileges, and grant to us a largeness of beatitude. We enter our studies and enjoy a society which we alone can bring together. We raise no jealousy by conversing with one in preference to another; we give no offense to the most illustrious by questioning him as long as we will, and leaving as abruptly.

To be full of goodness, full of cheerfulness, full of sympathy, full of helpful hope, causes a man to carry blessings of which he is himself as unconscious as a lamp of its own shining. Such a one moves on human life as stars move on dark seas to bewildered mariners; as the sun wheels, bringing all the seasons with him from the south.

Perhaps God does with his heavenly garden as we do with our own. He may chiefly stock it from nurseries, and select for transplanting what is yet in its young and tender age—flowers before they have bloomed, and trees ere they begin to bear.

It is not good to speak evil of all whom we know bad; it is worse to judge evil of any who may prove good. To speak ill upon knowledge, shows a want of charity: to speak ill upon suspicion, shows a want of honesty.

The intoxication of anger, like that of the grape, shows us to others, but hides us from ourselves, and we injure our own cause, in the opinion of the world, when we too passionately and eagerly defend it.

Let us cherish sympathy. By attention and exercise it may be improved in every man. It prepares the mind for receiving the impressions of virtue; and without it there can be no true politeness.

Nothing is more odious than that insensibility which wraps a man up in himself and his own concerns, and prevents his being moved with either the joys or the sorrows of another.

Precept is instruction written in the sand, the tide flows over it and the record is gone. Example is graven on the rock, and the lesson is not soon lost.

No preacher is listened to but time; which gives us the same train and turn of thought that elder people have tried in vain to put into our heads.

Conquer thyself. Till thou hast done that thou art a slave; for it is almost as well for thee to be in subjection to another's appetite as thy own.

One great reason why the work of reformation goes on so slowly is because we all of us begin on our neighbors and never reach ourselves.

What is the difference between a fool and a wise man. The fool is ignorant and don't know it; the wise man is ignorant and does know it.

Nature is frank, and will allow no man to abuse himself without giving him a hint of it.

Morality is the harmony between act and circumstance. It is the melody of conduct.

The World's Happenings.

Of the 13 000 carpenters in New York city but 4000 are organized.

About 100 different kinds of insects are now known to attack corn.

Stone bullets were used in 1514; those of iron are first mentioned in 1550.

Telescopes were invented by Zacharias Jansen, a spectacle maker at Middleburg, in 1590.

A police officer of Los Angeles, Cal., carries a lasso and it ably assists him to perform his duty.

A vicious horse in Williamsport has distinguished itself by biting off the tongue of an equine companion.

The first historical mention of soap occurs in Pliny and Galen, the former attributing its invention to the Gauls.

The California Board of Silk Culture is engaged in distributing 700,000 silkworm eggs recently received from Italy.

The average New York business man disposes of his lunch in 8 minutes. This is a matter of record in a leading restaurant.

Morris Ladd, a constable at San Jose, Cal., is reported dying of glanders, contracted while treating a horse suffering with the disease.

Miss Olive Green and Mr. Ivory White were wedded in an Iowa town recently, the Rev. Mr. Black performing the ceremony. Such, at least, is the story.

A man has been arrested in National City, Cal., for publicly wearing on his back a card stating that a companion had refused to pay him a debt of $150.

President Chamberlain has been counting the number of chinch bugs to the square inch in Iowa. In the single area of one inch examined he found 3264 bugs.

Under the laws of Maine you can borrow a man's horse, keep him for a year and a day, and then settle for 20 cents per day for every day the animal was used.

An old couple in Lichieros, after celebrating their golden wedding, took to quarreling, and the man threw his wife in the fire, killed her, and cut his own throat.

California farmers display much energy in ridding their fields of the rabbit pest. At a big rabbit drive about 2,000 men were in line and over 4,000 rabbits were slaughtered.

A large club has been formed at Pittsburg to evade the Sunday liquor law. The members and their wives will secure a hall, where they can drink on Sunday without interference.

A man named Post and a woman named Stump were married some time ago by a preacher named Lockwood in a little town in Maryland. They now have a boy named James Lamp Post.

During a fire in New York, at the time of the blizzard, policemen, citizens and firemen seized the snow, made it into balls and threw it at a burning store. Within 20 minutes the fire was out.

Among the Japanese engravings which are now exhibited in London is one in which is shown a little boy exposing his body to the attacks of mosquitoes, so that his parents may be spared the bites.

If you should ever be chased by bloodhounds it may be well to know that sheets of tissue paper placed on the ground, under the feet, and then removed, would carry with them every trace of the scent.

At Fresno, Cal., a ewe gave birth recently to 3 lambs, 2 white and 1 black as the ace of clubs. When the mother saw this off-color offspring she stamped on and butted the poor little fellow until it was dead.

Under the new system of recording convicts, no one who escapes can fail to be reidentified. Arms, legs and fingers are measured, the size of the feet are taken, and in some cases fac-similes of ears and nose are preserved in plaster.

The scope of the messenger boy's work appears to be broadening very materially. In New York, the other day, one of them was called upon to escort an intoxicated man from a saloon in Forty-second street to his home, in Harlem.

A beautiful brown and golden bird in Mexico is a remarkably expert bee-catcher. He has a way of ruffling the feathers on the top of his head so that his crest looks like a beautiful flower. When a bee comes along to sip honey from this delusive blossom it is snapped up and devoured.

They don't treat the book agent with incivility out in Iowa. He sells a book called "The History of Prohibition," and it is in great demand. Some men have bought dozens of copies. It is a peculiar book. Between its covers is a half-pint bottle filled with the best Milwaukee whisky.

It is stated that in various military districts of North and South Germany, as well as in Holland, trials have been made of wire soles covered with a substance resembling India-rubber. They are said to be more durable than those made of leather, and to cost only about half the price of leather.

Monkeys play the mischief with telegraph wires in Southern Mexico. They delight to climb the poles and indulge in gymnastic exercises on the wires. Sometimes 100 monkeys may be seen swinging on the wires, festooned, monkey fashion, by looping their tails, and their weight and the continuous vibrations break the wires from their fastenings.

It is interesting to learn that Mrs. Cleveland always calls her husband "Mr. President." Mr. Cleveland addresses his wife as "Frank." Martha Washington, in her younger days, called her husband "George," but in the last 25 years of her life she always addressed him as "General." While in the White House Mrs. Hayes called her husband "Mr. Hayes." Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Garfield always addressed their husbands respectively as "Abram" and "Jim." Now the question is, what should a President's wife, according to etiquette, call her husband? Precedent seems to give no answer.

IN SPRING.

BY MARY CROSS.

By all the dewdrops' diamond globes
I trace the path of Spring,
And mark how to her airy robes
The dainty snowdrops cling.

As hawthorn banners are unfurled
Gray Winter wanders hence;
The light of youth is on the world,
The charm of innocence.

And Nature, from life's cares and ills,
Bids weary thought take wing,
To lands where God Himself fulfils
The promise of the Spring.

A Bachelor's Bedroom.

BY CLEMENT BIRD.

YOUNG Percy Chafer was a lucky fellow. It is true that after a course of six years at one of the big hospitals he was still only a medical student; but he had become "qualified" during that time, or he could never have been engaged to the plain but fascinating Miss Bastwick.

The Rev. Sir Ebenezer Bastwick, Bart., was the squaresson of Loavesea-cum-Fishingham. He owned most of the property in that neighborhood; but landowning did not occupy quite all his time, so he bestowed his leisure upon the cure of souls, and the family living upon himself.

Loavesea rectory, which commanded a fine view of open sea and sky, was let to an artist who was great at turning those natural advantages to mercantile account; for it was not to be expected that the Bastwicks should turn out of the comfortable mansion to which Providence and the successful roguery of a remote ancestor had called them.

It was argued by certain disaffected persons that the Hall was inconveniently far away from the parish—it was almost a day's journey for people who did not keep a carriage, as few of the Loavesea congregation did—but as the Rev. Baronet was not inclined to hold very frequent intercourse with his flock, such cavillers were treated with the righteous contempt which they deserved.

When Chafer went down to read with his friend Timson for another "shot" at the examination periodically held by the Royal College of Surgeons, he found that newly-fledged practitioner very thick with the Bastwicks.

He had crept into Lady Bastwick's good opinion by the prompt way in which he had dealt with an outbreak of measles among Sir Ebenezer's tenants in the village.

Emboldened by her petting, the ambitious apothecary was preparing to lay siege to the virgin affections of Miss Pulsatilla, the only child and consequently the heiress of the house of Bastwick.

Now, it so happened that Pulsatilla's mother was of a novel-reading and romantic turn, and she had determined that the heiress, whether she married for love or not, should form what reasonable people generally consider an imprudent match. Still, even this matron's slender discernment could see limits to the unsuitability which she required, and Mr. Timson was decidely outside those limits.

He exhibited a nervous susceptibility in the presence of ladies that branded his lowly origin only too plainly upon his homely countenance.

His skin, too, was indelicately porous: in spite of the constant applications of a red silk pocket-handkerchief, Pulsatilla's presence, or her very name, would continually summon the dew to his shiny temples and meek nose.

Nevertheless, to Lady Bastwick's horror, the gentle bosom of her child seemed not to harbor any insuperable objection to these drawbacks. She was considering the best way out of the entanglement which her own impetuosity had ravelled, when the unexpected intervention of Mr. Percy Chafer cut the knot in the least troublesome manner possible.

It soon appeared that the erudite and meritorous Timson was no competitor with the gay and artless Percy in the science of wooing a maiden's unappropriated heart. Timson was out of the running directly he brought his guest for the first time to the Hall, and at the end of a month he had the satisfaction of congratulating his supplanter with the best show of sincerity that he could muster.

Percy came back to town like a giant refreshed with wine; in fact, though he was far from possessing Herculean size or strength, his experiments upon the knockers and railings of his street on that joyful night were unhesitatingly ascribed by his set, which assembled to rejoice with him, to alcoholic influence.

The morning after his removal to more commodious "diggings"—a step warranted by his recent stroke of luck—he received a note from Lady Bastwick which requested him to be in readiness to meet herself and Pulsatilla at Waterloo Station that very afternoon, as they were coming to town for a week's shopping.

Percy was delighted at this excuse for doing nothing during the next few days. He escorted the travellers to a fashionable hotel, and declared his intention of sacrificing himself entirely to their pleasure.

"How good you are!" said Pulsatilla softly. "Shall I tell him what we are both looking forward to, mamma?"

Lady Bastwick was fast succumbing to the effects of fatigue and an extensive dinner: she murmured an incoherent affirmative, and fell asleep.

"Well, then," continued Pulsatilla shyly, "I—that is, we—are so looking forward to seeing you in your rooms, Percy. Your description of them in your letters, you know, make me long to see just what they are like for myself; not because I don't believe your description is as good and correct as such things can be," she added, with a smile, "only I do want to picture you in them exactly as you are; you must look so clever and learned" (she did not know how repeatedly he had been ploughed); "and—and—you will take us there, won't you?"

"Why, of course, dear; of course," replied Percy, pulling rather awkardly at his precipitous collar. "By the way—ah—when would you like to come, eh?" he asked, after a slight pause.

He felt uncomfortable, though he might surely have foreseen this.

But it never entered his head that Pulsatilla would be coming so soon, and in this stealthy, suspicious sort of way, too. He was half inclined to belive that Timson must have been slandering him behind his back.

"Couldn't we come to-morrow?" asked Pulsatilla, brightening at the thought of invading the awful sanctuary of bachelorhood, and perhaps leaving some feminine token of victory upon its shrine.

"Well, it's very unfortunate," responded Percy quickly, "but the upholsterer has not quite finished there yet; you see, there are one or two little jobs——"

"The upholsterer!" interrupted Pulsatilla mildly; "why, you told me in one of your letters that you had got quite settled at the beginning of last week."

"Yes, of course I did," said the unfortunate Percy; "I don't mean the upholsterer at all—what could have made me say it, I wonder?—No, it's the window-cleaner, and it really must be done, you know," he added somewhat lamely.

"But cleaning two or three windows ought not to take long, Percy. But even supposing it does, why shouldn't you put him off? We shan't mind dirty windows for once in a way."

"Oh, but you would mind these very much," said Percy desperately; "they aren't like ordinary windows, you know, and it isn't like ordinary dirt either, not a bit. Besides," he went on more confidently, "the man says that he has done part of the job now, and can't leave it unfinished; and he must do it when he can, and not when I like, because he's got so many other engagements. So don't you think you could make it the day after to-morrow, Pulsatilla?"

"Very well," she answered sadly; "since you seem to wish it, I will ask mamma if we may alter our other arrangements to suit."

The fact, unhappily, was that Percy's account of his rooms had been colored in a manner that bore a very slight relation with the facts.

In the first place, it would never have done to tell the Bastwicks straight out about his having taken expensive chambers on the strength of his new prospects. On his side there was only an old guardian in the country, with whom he did not correspond except upon business matters.

But it was well, he thought, to assert the evil conduct of his previous landlady as the cause of his leaving her.

Then, if they assumed his new lodgings to be on the same poverty-stricken scale as his old ones had been, they did so at their own risk and on their own responsibility. His policy, therefore, had been to let them into the secret gradually, and, as it were, by imperceptible degrees.

Now, however, the dream was shattered; he must turn his rooms into a howling wilderness, or allow his sensitive *fiancee* to discover his depravity at a glance. He resolved to adopt the first alternative, and begin the work of converting his luxurious sitting room into a study worthy the shade of Galen himself before any further time was lost.

Several friends came in to help him, and they made light of the whole matter, protesting that it was a most excellent joke. Percy, however, remained quite blind to this aspect of the case.

From first to last he was loud in lamentations; and had not left off bemoaning his unhappy lot when his friends departed, promising that they would return again the next night to complete the desolation. Percy's bedroom was a large one, and all his more sumptuous furniture was accordingly piled there by the conspirators.

The plain deal table—almost too plain to seem plausible—and hard kitchen chairs looked strangely incongruous beside the handsome curtains and cornices.

A skeleton and a collection of miscellaneous anatomical fragments were generously contributed by sympathizers, and scattered about the room in studied disorder.

These fragments did not mend matters much, only giving an air of wilder barbarism to the apartment.

They succeeded, at any rate, in conveying the idea that its occupant was not merely a savage but a cannibal. On second thoughts Percy huddled all these trophies also into the bedroom; and then, first anxiously scrutinizing the scene to see that no detail of power to shock or scandalize the ladies' feelings had been allowed to survive, he started off, full of forebodings, to fetch Pulsatilla and her mother.

It was with a wildly palpitating heart that he drew forth his latchkey, and fumbled at the keyhole.

He was so long in getting the door open that Pulsatilla was struck by his odd behavior.

"Is anything the matter, Percy?" she whispered anxiously; "you don't look well."

His looks did not belie his feelings, it seemed. He longed to make a clean breast of it, but the presence of Lady Bastwick made that impossible. There was nothing left for him but to keep up his amiable deception.

"The fact is, I was kept up deuced late last night," he said; "the standard of these horrid exams. is getting higher every year, and there's no keeping up to it unless a fellow works more than he ought, you know. One can't help feeling just a little out of sorts now and then, but I shall be all right presently."

As he made this sanguine prediction he ushered the two ladies into his room. A look of relief appeared upon his face as he saw that it still remained as he had left it. The horrid thought had flashed across his mind that some practical joker might have stepped in to arrange a surprise for him on his return.

But this proved to have been a baseless chimera: not even the folding-doors which led into the bedroom had been touched, but faithfully continued to guard the oak and mahogany secrets of the inner chamber.

Under these favorable circumstances Percy's spirits grew once more buoyant. He ordered tea, a beverage he personally detested, on purpose for Pulsatilla to enjoy the treat of dispensing it from his tea-pot. This was another small fiction; the tea-pot was purloined for the occasion from the cupboard of another gentleman downstairs (Percy lived on the first floor) who happened to be out of town.

It was an unusually gorgeous utensil, and was decorated with the owner's crest and arms.

"What's this, Percy?" inquired his prospective mother-in-law, examining the tea-pot through her glasses; "we have never asked you about your coat of arms—of course we simple folks care nothing about such worldly matters—but I must confess it was too modest of you, my dear boy, never to breathe a word about it yourself. Why, it's lovely. Let me see, now; what do you call these things? Dear me, how stupid of me to forget, to be sure;" and she pointed to certain mysterious marks on the escutcheon which might have been hieroglyphs or cabalistic signs for all the poor young man knew.

He almost choked; but Pulsatilla was looking straight at him, and he felt that she would not enjoy the tea half so well unless her mother's question was answered. So he pulled himself together, reflecting that in all probability Lady Bastwick's knowledge of heraldry was on a par with his own, and replied with a very slight tremor in his voice: "I believe they're called gules, but I'm not sure."

"Of course they are," cried Lady Bastwick, delighted to discover a fresh bond of sympathy between Percy and her self; "you must not forget to let papa know that," she added, turning towards her daughter; "he will think ever so much more of Percy when he knows that he has got gules to his name."

Percy's spirits at these words descended into his patent-leather boots, for something told him that the news would operate in a directly opposite manner upon the absent baronet.

"And what is the motto?" asked Pulsatilla, pausing suddenly in the act of pouring out the tea. "I do love mottoes, especially old ones that have not been made to order. Some new ones have a dreadfully artificial ring about them—don't you think so, Percy?"

"Oh, yes, I suppose so," replied the badgered youth; "but our motto, though of course it's very old, is not a very good one; it's rather commonplace; in fact, I think you'll be rather disappointed with it. Perhaps I'd better not tell you at all."

"Oh, yes; come, now, you must tell it."

"Well, then," he said with desperate coolness, "it's merely *Nux vomica*."

He scarcely knew how his words came, for he was not celebrated as a Latin scholar, and had never even fancied himself an eligible candidate for academic distinction in that department of learning. However, it seemed that the Mother of Invention had for once prompted him with considerable success.

Percy thanked his stars that Providence had prevented Sir Ebenezer from accompanying his family.

"Well, how do you like it, Pulsatilla?" he inquired nervously.

"I think it's splendid," she replied, glowing with pride in her lover's scholastic attainments. "For it is not every doctor who knows what his prescriptions mean," she thought to herself. "But what does it mean, Percy?" she went on.

"Well, you see, it's one of those things that can't be translated literally," he replied—he had already forgotten what the motto was—"freely rendered, it means, "Call a spade a spade"; that's about as near as I can get to it for you."

"And an excellent motto it is, too," exclaimed Lady Bastwick; "a good, sound, practical maxim, and yet not without that delicious glamor of romance that gilds all our treasured memories of the past with its dear effulgent——but surely, Percy, my poor boy, you have got something more comfortable to sit on than these chairs?"

Percy assured her that he had not, and remarked that he thought of purchasing a second-hand arm-chair, covered with American cloth, which he believed was going to be sold by auction, together with some other furniture, at a house not far from his lodgings.

"It does add to the unpleasantness of work when one has to do it in a chair like this," he observed, touching a rickety structure of adamantine surface as he spoke.

"I wonder you can do any work at all!" said Pulsatilla, almost in tears.

"It is hard," Percy admitted; though whether he alluded to the work, or the chair on which he was supposed to do it, may be considerable doubtful.

"But what a foolish boy you are," said Pulsatilla, who was now gazing critically at the curtains; "why, you must have spent a lot on these curtains, they're perfectly lovely, and so good; just feel," she added, as Lady Bastwick advanced to inspect them.

"They are indeed," was that lady's corroborative comment; "I only wish Sir Ebenezer would let me have some like them for the drawing-room at the Hall. May I ask what you paid for them, Percy? How thoughtless of you not to have spent the money on a few comfortable chairs!"

Pulsatilla and her mother were certainly providing some splendid opportunities for the exhibition of Percy's ready wit. Could they have known what an unmitigated nuisance their kindly interest was to him! But the painful discovery was not to be yet.

"It's rather funny you should have noticed those curtains," he stammered; "you see I had to begin furnishing gradually, and thought it best to begin with them because they were were going so cheap—only ninepence halfpenny a yard, at the Stores—not a bad bargain, eh?" and he paused defiantly.

"Ninepence halfpenny! Extraordinary!" murmured Lady Bastwick; "I must go and order several pairs at once, if that is the case."

"Ah, you can't do that," struck in Percy, pale with terror at the idea; "these were only remnants, you know, and there's not a scrap more left; you would have to pay ten times the price for anything like them now. But you can have these, if you

like: I'll make you a present of them."

"By no means," said Lady Bastwick decisively, turning round, and stooping towards the floor.

"I see you're looking at the carpet," continued the wretched Percy, who had shrunk from the idea of taking it up; "nice one, isn't it? Yes, Turkey, they tell me. Yes, but it's not mine, it's only lent—that is, it belongs to my landlord, and is a fixture, or whatever it's called. Very nice man, my landlord: so obliging you know."

He led them back again to their former uncomfortable seats. But this time Pulsatilla was harder to be appeased than her mother.

"Altogether, the room is not much like your description, Percy," she said, with a touch of reproachful severity.

"Perhaps that is because I am not good at description," he said jauntily, trying to laugh it off: "you must not expect to find a second Ruskin in me, my dear; word-painting is not much in my line. Besides, aren't you mistaken, now, after all? I should have thought my description, if not a scrupulously faithful likeness, at least gave one a pretty correct idea."

"I don't think so at all," she answered ruthlessly. "For instance, there's a piano in the room, and I don't see how you could have expected me to get the idea of it into my head, if you didn't say anything about it."

This was no less true than forcible. The piano had utterly refused to be squeezed into the bedroom in addition to all the rest of the lumber which was densely packed there.

Percy manifested contrition.

"How strange that I should have forgotten to mention the piano!" he exclaimed; "the more so because it's the one luxury I allow myself."

This artful appeal to her commiseration did not fail of its effect.

The piano was forgotten: but Pulsatilla was beginning to eye the table in a way that made Percy writhe, when there came a knock at the door, and Mr. Pestle was announced.

"Oh, come in," cried Percy; "you will be pleased to know Pestle, I am sure," he said, addressing Lady Bastwick.

"Excuse me," said Pestle hastily, "but Mortar's outside; may I bring him in, Chater? We didn't know you were having company, and——"

"Yes, bring him in," interrupted Percy, and while Mr. Mortar was being informed that the "spree" was not yet over, the ladies were told what excellent fellows Pestle and Mortar both were, and how universally beloved by all who knew them.

"Capital room, very," said Mr. Mortar, who was voluble to Lady Bastwick, "but scarcely as good as his bedroom—that is, of course, for a bedroom."

"I should like to see it very much," said the lady. "You must let us see your bedroom, Percy," she continued, "Mr. Mortar tells me it is an unusually good one; we should never have heard of it if it had not been for his thoughtfulness—you really are too forgetful, Percy."

Forgetful! He had thought of nothing but that accursed bedroom for the whole day. And, if it had not been for the odious perfidy of the shameless Mortar, he might have lived to tell how he passed through the ordeal of that terrible afternoon, and emerged a victor.

"The door's locked," he said thickly.

"Then let us have the key," said Lady Bastwick, approaching the awful portal with a smile unconscious of the imminent catastrophe.

"I haven't got it. It—it's lost," and the miserable deceiver sank down upon one of his hard chairs.

"I dare say the key is on the other side of the door," said the inflexible Pestle; "however, there's another way in, and if the ladies will follow me——"

"No—no—no," screamed Percy. "There's nothing to see—it's all a lie—you wouldn't like it when you got there—it's full of things—rubbish, you know."

"Why are you so strangely agitated, Percy?" inquired Lady Bastwick, confronting him; "you will frighten poor Pulsatilla, if you go on. Allow me, if you please," for he had his back against the door.

"Well, go, if you must; you'll only find Smith's furniture that I'm keeping for him till he can send for it to his new diggings," and he flung away from the door with a clumsy attempt at merriment.

While the rest of the party filed solemnly out at the door he stayed half-stupified, looking out at the widow. But a horrified cry from the adjoining room roused him. Rushing in, he found Lady Bastwick spell-bound before a large bottle on a shelf; it contained all that was mortal of a very meagre and mis-shapen baby. As he entered, she glared at him, and raised the finger of disgust.

"Don't come near us!" she screeched, "and don't touch my poor child. Ugh, you Bluebeard! you unclean body-snatcher!"

"It's only a very little one," muttered the delinquent apologetically, as his senses left him.

* * * * * *

When Percy came to, he found himself alone. He had the pleasure of receiving all his letters and presents to Pulsatilla by the next morning's post.

A few months later the *Times* contained the following, under the head of Marriages:—

"On the 21th inst. at the Church of St. Leonard, Leavesea, by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, Thomas Timson, M.R.C.S. etc., to Pulsatilla, only child of the Rev. Sir Ebenezer Bastwick, Bart., M.A., of Bastwick Hall, and rector of the united parishes of Leavesea-cum-Fishingham. Friends will receive this, the only intimation."

A Clever Hoax.

BY A. G. R.

IT was late—after midnight—as we got up from the whist-table and gathered round the fire, and Colonel Thornton said: "If you men are not too tired and don't mind sitting up for another half-hour, I think I can tell you a good story."

We protested we were never less tired and could sit up till morning if necessary. So the Colonel began:

"My father, as you know, was a parson; but he took Orders late in life, after having been fifteen years at the Bar, and the events of which I am going to tell you he, himself, told me as having come directly under his eye when he was a barrister.

"It was at the Monmouth Assizes, in 18—, that a case was tried which became the talk of the neighborhood and country for years after.

"My father was sitting in the Court of the Assistant Judge, when a note was brought him from a friend in the adjoining Court, asking him to come and hear a case of more than usual interest, the facts of which were these:

"Some time before, a farmer's house, near Monmouth, had been broken into and robbed by men disguised and masked, the farmer murdered, and his servant shockingly ill-treated.

"Among other things which were stolen were two old-fashioned silver brooches, curiously inlaid with malachite, heirlooms of the family, and, although unremitting search was made, and the description of the lost articles made widely known, no trace of the murderers could be found.

"A month or two after the murder, however, a police-officer, in going through a common lodging-house in Bristol, noticed a dissipated-looking sailor lying on a pallet and resting his head on a small bundle. He asked him what it contained, and was told that it was 'only his kit.'

"The officer, not satisfied, opened the bundle, and almost the first things to fall out were two brooches made of silver and malachite. Struck by their curious beauty, and wondering how such a wretched-looking fellow could have become possessed of them, he suddenly remembered the advertisement and description of the stolen articles.

"'How did you come by these?' he enquired.

"The sailor replied: 'By chance. When I came ashore some time ago, with plenty of money in my pocket, I met an old seaman who was down on his luck, and he offered to sell me these things, which had belonged to his mother. I was pretty flush, and gave him a good price for them, although they were useless to me. And that's all about it.'

"The police-officer, still dissatisfied, took him into custody. He was sent to Monmouth Gaol, the brooches were identified, and he was committed for trial at the Assize on the charge of theft and murder. And," continued the Colonel, impressively, "as my father entered the Court, this man was being placed in the dock.

"Tall beyond the then average height of men, and gaunt, with an unkempt beard and an evil, yellow eye, and though evidently suffering from his long imprisonment, he yet presented a powerful and imposing front. The trial had begun, and he had just been asked the usual question, 'Are you guilty or not guilty?' and had answered in a hollow voice 'Not guilty, my lord.' when the entrance of one of the Court officials with a gentleman stopped the proceedings for awhile. And here I must explain this interruption.

"A few days before, a quiet, gentlemanly man, a Captain Forsyth, of His Majesty's Navy, had arrived at the chief hotel of the town on a fishing excursion; but the weather had been so adverse, that he was obliged to look elsewhere for amusement. Turning to the landlord for information, he was told of this trial as exciting considerable interest; and so it came to pass, that as the prisoner took his place at the bar, Captain Forsyth sent his card to the Judge, who gladly allowed him, as was then the custom, a seat on the bench.

"The case proceeded; witnesses were called to identify the brooches, the servants swore to the figure of the prisoner as resembling that of the murderer; no witnesses were called for his defence—no one defended him; everything pointed to his guilt, and the jury retired to their room. In a few minutes they returned, and, amid the breathless expectation of the crowded Court, the foreman announced their opinion that the man was 'Guilty.'

"Directly this word was uttered, the prisoner, who had been leaning as if for support against the side of the dock, raised himself to his full height, stretched out both his hands above his head, and, looking up, exclaimed in a broken voice, 'Not guilty, not guilty.'

"The judge then asked him, as was usual, if he had anything to say before sentence should be pronounced and the prisoner cried hoarsely, 'Not guilty, my lord, not guilty; before Heaven and man, I am innocent of this crime. I never set my eyes on the murdered man; I did no murder. Oh! Captain, Captain—' in his vehemence he addressed the judge as if he were his officer—'I am as innocent of this crime as the babe unborn.' He paused; then suddenly, in a voice choking with feeling, he exclaimed: 'Yes, yes, only one man can save me now; but he can do it, swear what you may. The Lord be thanked, that man is here!'

"A buzz of astonishment ran round the Court; the feeling of awe that had held the audience changed into one of amazement.

"'Point him out to me,' said the judge.

"'The man who can save me,' replied the prisoner, 'sits there beside you,' pointing to the astonished Captain Forsyth.

"The judge turned to Captain Forsyth and said: "This man appears to know you. Is it the case?"

"'Certainly not,' he replied, much surprised; 'I never saw him before in my life.'

"'Oh, Captain,' broke in the prisoner, 'yes, you needn't start, I know you, Captain Forsyth. You are never going to swear away an innocent man's life like that?'

"'It is curious, my man,' the Captain replied, 'that you know my name; but I repeat that I never saw you before in my life.'

"'What? Not know John Williams, of "The Neptune?" The coxswain of the Captain's cutter?'

"'Yes, I know John Williams; but you are not he. John Williams was the smartest man that ever served under me, and never likely to stand where you are now.'

"'Captain,' repeated the prisoner, 'I tell you I am John Williams. A long illness, a hard bout of drinking, and this cursed imprisonment have made me what I am. And I will prove it, Captain, I will prove it, if you only listen.'

"The sensation caused by this dialogue was immense. The judge, the members of the bar, and the spectators were equally astonished at the curious turn the affair had taken, and, though believing the man to be guilty of a desperate deceit to save his life, were eagerly awaiting what should come.

"'Captain,' continued the prisoner, 'I am accused of murdering a man here on the 25th of June, more than nine months ago. Now, tell me, sir, was not John Williams—your coxswain—invalided home from the West African station on the last day of that month?'

"'What the man says,' remarked Captain Forsyth to the judge, 'is perfectly true. His Majesty's ship, "The Invincible," sailed with our invalid men for England on the 30th of June."

"The prisoner went on: 'Yes, and I arrived in England at the end of July, weak and ill, and getting my prize-money, went and drank it all away. And that's how it was I was found at Bristol, where I had gone for another ship; and ever since then I have been in this accursed jail.'

"'The fellow is plausible enough," again remarked Captain Forsyth. 'He is certainly about the height of Williams. Well, my man, I suppose you can prove what you say.'

"'Ay, ay, Captain! Do you remember, on the tenth of last June, giving orders for a night raid on the native town off which we lay looking out for slavers?'

"'Yes, I do, to be sure.'

"'And that we were five boats in all. And the first to beach was the Captain's cutter. And the first man to jump out of it was you, Captain?'

"'Well, this is the most extraordinary thing I ever heard!' And, turning to the judge, the Captain said: 'Every word of this poor fellow's narrative is true, my lord. He may have picked it up somewhere; but I can't help beginning to think there is something behind it. My ship is still on foreign service, and I have only returned to take charge of another one.'

"'Well, go on, man?"

"'One word more, Captain, and maybe you will believe me. As we were fighting in the town, a negro came behind you with his axe and would have cut you in half before you saw him, had not a man rushed between and stopped him with his cutlass; and yet not quite stopped him, for that infernal negro's axe slipped down the cutlass and gashed the man's head open. Who was that man, Captain?"

"'John Williams,' was the reply, 'the coxswain of my cutter.

"'Ay, ay, Captain, and here is the cut which that axe made,' and, bending down, he lifted with one hand his long, untidy hair, and with the other pointed to a huge and fearful scar running for several inches along the side of his head.

"Captain Forsyth leapt from his seat.

"'Good Heavens, you are right! But how you have changed! My lord, this poor fellow had not sailed from the African coast when the murder was committed; it is impossible that he could be guilty of it. Williams, you saved my life; I thank gracious I have been able to save yours!"

"At these words everybody in the Court stood up and cheered the prisoner with the wildest excitement and enthusiasm; the judge said that in discharging him he must at the same time compliment him on his gallantry; and the foreman of the jury then and there started a subscription for him which came up to something near thirty pounds.

"Captain Forsyth ordered a chaise to take him post-haste to London for the purpose of removing Williams from a place with such horrible associations, and of getting him an appointment from the Admiralty. The people insisted on dragging the chaise out of the town with their own hands, the horses were then put-to, and amid deafening cheers, they drove off—and were never heard of again."

"Why was that?" someone asked, as the Colonel paused.

"Because it was a hoax?"

"What!" we all exclaimed. "A hoax?" We had listened breathlessly to the tale, which the Colonel certainly told admirably, the perspiration standing on his forehead as with horrible reality he personated the desperate sailor.

"Yes," he said, "a hoax. It was all a preconcerted arrangement; the Captain was merely a clever accomplice who played such parts for those of his associates in crime, who came near receiving their reward. This was probably his biggest performance; but though it answered well enough then, in these days of telegraphic communication and multiplied Navy Lists, it would be simply impossible."

Tim's Angel.

BY J. CASSELL.

HE was only a street Arab, and she a fashionable young lady who lived in one of those big squares which are as far apart from Tim's home as the poles, and whose inhabitants are nearly as unknown to each other as Eskimo and New Zealanders.

Yet, of all her numerous admirers, none worshipped her with a deeper or more genuine devotion than this little waif, whose love had been won in the following manner.

Wandering aimlessly about, towards the end of a bitterly cold November day, Tim was meditating a return to his miserable home with the matches which no one would buy, when a lady, struck by his pinched, starved look, paused in her quick walk, and took out her purse.

She was tall, and very beautiful to his enchanted eyes; but the charm did not lie only in her face, for, instead of throwing him the customary copper, she not only bought all his remaining matches for a bright new shilling, but questioned him about his day's work with real interest in her voice.

The smile and kind word went straight to Tim's warm heart. For days, and even nights, afterwards he thought of them. It was the first time a woman's voice had spoken softly to him since his mother died, and she was the one bright recollection in his sad life.

For her sake he tried to keep straight—give up stealing, and go to the Ragged School; but it was a hard fight sometimes, when all round him was misery and sin and poverty.

Tim was a hero in his way, though he would not have known a bit what you meant if you had told him so.

He shared a miserable room with three other boys like himself, except that they often brought home things which did not belong to them, while he sobbed himself to sleep with the hunger which sometimes threatened to make him break his promise to his mother.

"You must try to keep good company," had been her dying words; and when the cold kept him awake at night, Tim remembered them, wondering whether she knew what a hard fight he was having, and what she was doing, and what she was like up there in the far-off sky.

At the Ragged School they told him a good deal about heaven and the angels, but Tim could never quite make up his mind on the subject of these latter beings. It seemed impossible that his mother could be like those white-robed visions; but as woman's sympathy spoke to him in the tone of his "beautiful lady's" voice, Tim's ideal was formed at once. This was the kind of being, perhaps, with whom his mother now had intercourse. He ventured to try to solve the question at the Ragged School.

"Teacher," he said, plucking at the sleeve of the lady in whose class he was, "are them angels wot you told me about like the swells at the West End?"

"How do you mean?" asked the lady, rather puzzled.

"Why, do they wear fine clothes, and have swell faces—real beautiful faces?" continued Tim.

"Oh, yes, much more beautiful," was the reply. But Tim was not convinced, and a few days decided him that his teacher was altogether wrong.

For nearly a fortnight after the young lady had given him the shilling, he frequented the same corner, until he discovered the house where she lived. His motive was not charity—he would have scorned to beg from her; but there was a great attraction to him in watching her come and go and move about in a world so far apart from his own.

It was one of those curious fascinations for which even grown people cannot always account.

Whenever he could borrow a broom he swept the crossing near her house, taking care that she should not think he did it for money by always keeping out of sight when she crossed the road. Tim thought she must be very happy in that beautiful house.

One night, when dawdling about he had seen her go to a party. She was dressed in white, with flowers in her dress, and her hair shone like gold in the light which poured from the door when they opened it to let her out.

Tim felt that he had really seen an angel at last. The teacher at the Ragged School must be wrong: there could be nothing more beautiful than this lovely lady; and he thought about her more than ever after that, till she became a veritable angel to him.

But Tim's wildest dreams never soared anywhere near the last and best meeting he ever had with her.

Once more he was watching her go to a party, and as she stepped into the carriage, something bright and glistening dropped from her dress on to the snow.

Tim's quick eyes spied it in a moment. He darted forward and picked up the glittering jewel. Perhaps if he held it up at the window, the lady might speak to him, and even give him a trifle for his pains.

Do not blame his thoughts. Remember he was cold and starving.

Nobody quite knew what happened next—whether the footman gave Tim too hard a push, or whether, in his eagerness, Tim's own foot slipped; but the next minute he was under the horses' feet, and the wheels had gone over his legs.

A clergyman, passing along the pavement, stopped, and picked up the poor little writhing form.

But Tim remained quite unconscious that he was being carried up the steps and into the very house of his angel; that the grand butler—who would as soon have swept a crossing as carried such a bundle of rags—wheeled round a sofa to the fire, which something like pity in his lordly breast; while the Reverend Augustus Pleony's heart was asking wildly what fate had brought him to the only house in the great city he tried to avoid. Of all this Tim knew nothing.

They sent for a doctor, and kind hands coaxed back the little spark of life which had not yet run its course; but when they roused him to ask his name, he only murmured "Tim," and turned over with a long-drawn sigh.

Then they let him alone; and he lay for nearly an hour, quite still, only opening his eyes in time to see some one come in at the door.

He was not very far from the shadow land then, and the bright lights and grand room had no attraction for him; but his fast dimming eyes did not miss one step or movement of the new comer.

She was there herself—his angel—in the pure white dress in which she had been going to the party, with the diamonds sparkling at her throat, and her eyes shining like stars.

And she was coming to him—ragged Tim—and kneeling down by the sofa, and taking his poor, tired head to rest against her shoulder, saying, softly, "Poor little Tim!"

All this he knew, and it seemed like heaven already; but he only lay back with another sigh; then looked across at Mr. Pleony, and said—

"Ain't she just beautiful?"

The curate's pale face flushed.

"Yes," he said, simply. He was thinking that Tim was not the only person in the world who thought that.

Once more the boy roused himself to ask, "Won't I spoil your gown?"

But his angel only shook her head; for her woman's heart was beating so warmly under those fine clothes that she had no time to think of them, and she held him closer than before as she bent down to ask—

"Little Tim, do you know you are going to die?"

The words had no terror for him. Life had not been very sweet. He only smiled up in her face, and said—

"I sha'nt mind going if you hold me!"

Then she stopped her beautiful head lower, and lower still, until it touched his; and with his angel's kiss on his lips, Tim's spirit passed away!

* * * * * *

And Augustus Pleony went back to his little lodging that night, feeling that his daily work would never have seemed hard again if he could have exchanged those last minutes with Tim.

CONVALESCENT (to physician): "I see your bill, doctor, is $10. How much do you charge a visit?" Physician: "Two dollars." Convalescent: "But you only called three times." Physician: "Five times, my friend, three times for treatment and twice for my money." Convalescent: "I guess I had better hurry and pay up."

Mine Host's Daughter.

BY E. H. OUTHELL.

"OFF for a week or ten days to the seashore in December! Why, what is the matter with you? I had not heard you were ill."

"I am not ill."

"I thought only invalids went to such places in the winter."

"I am going on business."

And Tom Snyder tossed his cigar into the open grate, lighted a new one, and settled himself to explain.

He was a young man, somewhere about thirty, with some means, educated for a lawyer, but as yet unrecognized and unappreciated in his profession. His companion—Fred Cooke—a clerk in a large wholesale house, rather envied Tom his leisure time and certain, if not large, income.

He was a handsome young fellow, of good family, but compelled to work for his weekly wage; but Fred Cooke was a popular man, good-tempered, and energetic.

"Business!" he said, puffing away at his cigar.

"It is a new place," said Tom, "and several gentlemen have been buying it up to start a watering place. I have put some money into it, and I am going to study up the sites, see about the cost of putting up cottages, and all that. There is a hotel there, and in the season it has been well patronized; but there are no shops, and only a few small cottages, where fishermen live. Why don't you come with me?"

At first Fred declared it impossible to take a holiday, but Tom was urgent, and one fine, sunny morning (cold, but cheerful) the friends, well wrapped up, were sauntering on the seashore, having been nearly a week at Sunny Cove.

"The first thing," Tom was saying, is to give the place a name. Sunny Cove will never do."

"I saw that lovely girl this morning," Fred replied; "the one we noticed when we first came down."

"Mine host's daughter?" said Tom. "There's old Truxall now! Excuse me, old fellow! I'll go talk to him."

Fred shrugged his shoulders, and being thoroughly chilled, walked rapidly back to the hotel. As he passed the window of the small parlor that was the only public room warmed and open, he caught sight of a golden head against a cushioned chair back, and white hands busied in sewing.

He had not been in the parlor, Tom and himself preferring to smoke and chat in their own rooms; but he threw his wraps on the hall table, and entered, rubbing his cold hands.

The little figure in the arm-chair sprang up in a moment, to retreat.

"Do not let me disturb you, Miss Truxall," Fred said. "If you do I shall go to my room. Or," he added, suddenly and craftily, "perhaps I am intruding. Is this your private parlor?"

"Oh, no," said the pretty girl shyly; "this is the public parlor. But we never have any guests in winter, and I often sit here."

"Do you not find it lonely."

"It is pleasant in summer. There are four families who come every year, and they have been very kind to me. They come here because it is quiet, and they do not have to dress and fuss as they would at a fashionable hotel. But"—sighing—"I am afraid all those pleasant days are over. My father says Mr. Snyder told him there is a company formed to build here, and make a regular watering-place of it."

"But, surely, you will like that," said Fred, well-pleased that she had resumed her seat and her sewing. "A house full of gay company, cottages all around you, young people going and coming!"

She lifted her soft dark eyes to meet his very frankly, but with a troubled expression.

"All that sounds pleasant," she said; but I shall not see it. Father is too old to keep up with new customs. He has fallen into a regular routine, and can please the quiet people who come here now; but to start a stylish hotel with men waiters, fancy cooking and grand company, would confuse him. He will probably sell the house the company and we will go away."

So they chatted, growing confidential, the pretty, shy girl, childlike in her confidences to this kindly stranger, whose handsome face expressed so much sympathy. The dinner bell broke in upon their conversation, and Tom, coming downstairs, said "Where in the world have you been?"

"In the parlor," was the reply.

And, for the first time, Fred played false to friendship, and said no more.

The committee came down the next day, and for nearly a week Tom had scarcely time to eat or sleep.

A gig was hired, and in parties of two and three the busy men laid out building lots, interviewed old inhabitants, made estimates of timber, planned rooms, and were constantly in deep consultation, Tom being everywhere.

And Fred haunted the parlor, coming in the forenoon and afternoon, and often, finding Tom busy, spending the evening hours there also.

Mr. Truxall, an old man, with but one absorbing passion, his love for Bessie, his only child, came to make a third at these interviews.

He was a man of slow speech, and but few ideas, and he was utterly bewildered at the proposed plans for Sunny Cove.

All his easy-going life was disturbed. The busy, active men who were continually popping in and out, loudly discussing plans, writing letters, asking questions, and making proposals, bewildered and troubled him.

All Tom owned in the world was put into the new enterprise, and with a fair prospect of making a fortune by the venture.

But one obstacle was perpetually before the new company.

Old Truxall hesitated and demurred about selling the "Cove Hotel," and would not be tempted by the most alluring offers. Letters were written, offering the most favorable terms, but the old gentleman would accept no proposals.

June was nearly over, and already every cottage was rented. Tom, who had been kept closely to his city work, was thinking of taking a run down to the new sea-side resort, when the chairman of the company to which he belonged strolled into his office.

"We may as well give up Truxall now," he said, wiping his face, and taking up a fan. "He has completely metamorphosed his old barn. We, Tyndale and I, were down last week, and you would not know the place. Repainted outside and in, with porches on every floor, refurnished, recarpeted from cellar to attic, big chandeliers in the dining-room, smart waiters, brisk maids on each floor, and every room filled. The old name is painted over, and it is now 'The Cove House.'"

"Somebody else has made the old fossil a better offer than ours," said Tom angrily.

"No; but he has taken a partner—a young fellow full of energy and push. I have their card, with a picture of the front of the hotel and the sea view. Here it is—'Truxall and Cooke.'"

"Cooke!" cried Tom, feeling that friendship was a fraud and delusion.

"Yes. Here are the names in one corner—John Truxall and Frederick Cooke."

"Now I wonder," said Tom musingly, "where Fred got the money to buy a partnership with old Truxall, and start off in this style. He had nothing but his salary six months ago."

"Oh, I don't suppose he put any money in," said the chairman. "He married mine host's daughter."

THE ETIQUETTE OF CARDS.

The etiquette of cards is very punctiliously observed by ladies in cities and large towns. A visiting card should be left in person when intended to serve instead of a call. A wife should leave cards for her husband with her own when making what is familiarly termed a "party call." From three to half past five o'clock are the fashionable hours for formal calls. The card now in use is of rather thick Bristol board, of medium size, with the name engraved in script. A married lady's card should be a size larger than her daughter's, and a gentleman's card should be still smaller.

After an entertainment, visiting cards should be left by all invited guests, whether they have accepted the invitation or not, and this courtesy should not be delayed over a week or ten days. If the entertainment be a dinner or lunch, the call should be made in person. If one intends to accept an invitation to a wedding reception, it is not necessary to reply, because the hostess expects to provide for all whom she has asked; but if unable to attend, one's visiting card should be sent, to arrive on the day of the entertainment. To an afternoon tea or reception, the same rule applies, but not in any case should the words "regrets" be written on the card. Once it was in very bad taste to send a card by post, but now the custom is allowed, although admitted to be far less elegant than the older style of having a messenger leave it. But, although it will do to mail a card that is to acknowledge one's indebtedness for an invitation no one must think of mailing a card which is to represent an ordinary call. Such cards should be left in person.

When a lady is leaving town for an absence of any considerable length, she may notify her friends by sending them her P. P. C. cards—that is, her visiting cards, with those letters, signifying *pour prendre congé*, written in a corner. As the preparations for departure may presumably have absorbed much time, the sender of the cards may transmit them by mail, although leaving them in person would be more elegant. It is also proper for a lady to mail to her circle of friends cards bearing her new address when she changes her residence from one part of the town to another.

After most forms of entertainment, as has had been said, a call or card is due from the guests, but after informal afternoon teas nothing is expected, as they are not "parties," in the strict sense of the term, and in attending them one simply makes a call, leaving cards on entering, precisely as for calls. It is eminently proper for ladies in town to have the address upon the card, usually engraved in small letters in the right-hand corner. If a lady has a regular day to be "at home," it should be put in the left-hand corner.

Much of the ladies' card etiquette belongs also to the gentleman's code. If a lady has invited a gentleman to her house on any especial occasion, he should by all means call or leave a card, shortly afterward, whether he accepted or declined. If his invitation is from a new acquaintance, he must be very prompt, and make his acknowledgment of the civility within two days after the entertainment. In any case, he should leave two cards, one for the mistress and one for the master of the house. A gentleman generaly adds "Mr." to his card, although there was once a prejudice against the custom, and a professional man may very properly put his title, as by doing so he simply indicates the manner in which he is to be addressed.

A married woman should have her husband's full name or his initials on her card, unless she is a widow, in which case she can have her husband's or use her own, as she pleases. Married couples now have their names upon separate cards, but there is no objection to the time-honored fashion of putting "Mr. and Mrs." on the visiting card, if any prefer that form to the more modern one of having separate cards for each member of the family. For visiting intimate friends, and for sending with bridal and other gifts, a single card inscribed with both names is certainly the style to be preferred.

Custom no longer insists upon a card being left for each member of a family. In making a former call, a card must be left for the lady of the house; one for a married daughter, if there be one living with her; but one card suffices for several unmarried sisters. The fashion of turning the corners of cards, or folding them over, is no longer imperative, and fortunate it is for people with short memories; for it is very difficult to remember the varied significance given by the various doublings. When calling upon a friend who is stopping at another person's house, it is courtesy to leave a card for the hostess, even if the latter be an entire stranger.

"OH, dear!" exclaimed Mrs. F., after vainly endeavoring to pour hot water out of an empty tea-kettle, "how did I forget it, I wonder? I'm getting to be a perfect simpleton. I wish I did have a little common sense." "But, my dear," interrupted Fogg, "suppose you had. Do you think you'd know what to do with it?" "Do with it," echoed Mrs. F. "Many things. I might want to be married again, you know, and perhaps it would save me from making a fool of myself a second time."

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

There is in Wilmington a man named American Independence McClintock. He is a machinist, about 35 years of age, and while he admires the patriotism that inspired his parents to thus christen him, he never writes his name in full. His intimates call him "Inde" and the directory sets him down as Independence. Another patriotic father who once lived in Delaware had three sons named New Castle, Kent and Sussex, after the three counties. Sussex is a lawyer.

Owing to the increase of sickness, thought to be due to impure food and poisonous liquors, the Municipal Council of Lima (Peru) ordered an analysis to be made of 245 different articles purchased from almost as many stores. The result showed that 86 were counterfeits and twelve were dangerous to health, 24 were adulterated, or were not what they were sold for; 18 were decomposing, or so changed as to be unfit for consumption, 48 were impure, but not positively dangerous, 32 were imitations, fairly passable, while only 32 were really good.

Suicide is not a matter about which one generally feels inclined to joke; yet there was a humorous as well as a pathetic side of the tragedy by which the Italian opera-singer, Signora Bastia, lately put an end to her life. She locked herself up in a cellar, threw the key away, and deliberately starved herself to death. And why? She was young, she was beautiful, she was popular, she was rich, and she had no family troubles. A note which was found upon her body explained the enigma. "I have recently become too stout to look well upon the stage," wrote the unfortunate prima donna. "Rather than grow stout, I die." Signora Bastia had sung in such important roles as those of "Aida" in Verdi's opera, and "Carmen" in Bizet's, and though not known out of Italy, she was a rapidly rising artist.

An old Scotchman was taking his grist to mill in sacks thrown across the back of his horse, when the horse stumbled and the grain fell to the ground. He had not strength to raise it, he being an aged man; but he saw a horseman riding along, and thought he would appeal to [illegible]. But the horseman proved to be a nobleman, who lived in a castle hard by; and the farmer could not muster courage to ask a favor of him. But the nobleman was a gentleman also; and, not waiting to be asked, he quickly dismounted, and between them they lifted the grain to the horse's back. John—for he was a gentleman, too—lifted his Kilmarnock bonnet, and said, "My lord, how shall I ever thank you for your kindness?" "Very easily, John," replied the nobleman. "Whenever you see another man in the same plight as you were in just now, help him; and that will be thanking me."

According to a London paper ladies are no longer to wear birds on their hats and hats. There has been decreed by fashion. The humanitarians [illegible] in time to save the last remnant of the race of humming birds and birds of Paradise. The great forests of India, Brazil, and the banks of the Mississippi have been ransacked and have yielded up their treasures of winged jewels to adorn the feminine headgear. Now at last there is to be a truce to the massacre, and the pretty denizens of the woods may sing and fly awhile at peace. To estimate the extent of the slaughter perpetrated for the sake of womankind's adornment we may take the statement of a London dealer, who admits that last year he sold 2,000,000 small birds of every possible kind and color, from the soft gray of the wood pigeon to the gem-like splendor of the tropical bird. Even the friendly robin has been immolated to adorn the fashionable bonnet."

It seems to be popularly believed that murderers, and other criminals of the worst kind, are invariably ill-looking. This is evidently an error. A gentleman who is now in Germany, and who has lately been allowed to go over the Police Office in Berlin, writes that the police of the Prussian capital possess a very large collection of photographs of living criminals of all nationalities, and that a majority of the scoundrels are rather handsome than otherwise. He saw one portrait which partly struck him. It was that of a very young and beautiful woman, with an ingenuous smile upon her face, and a bewitching expression. He asked with some interest, about the history of the original, and learnt to his great astonishment, that she was an Austrian, who, in order to secure a small inheritance, had poisoned four of her nearest relations in succession, and had watched by their deathbeds with all the calculating cynicism of a fiend incarnate. As he was leaving the gallery, his guard showed him a photograph of a face which seems to be a very low type indeed. "Now, there is a typical murderer's face," said the visitor. "What awful crime did that man commit?" "Tarif," answered the official, "is the portrait of a man who is known all over Berlin for his philanthropy and goodness. We keep the picture because we find that it always deceives strangers, and especially phrenologists."

EXAMINE into your own shortcomings, rather than those of others.

Our Young Folks.

TOMMY'S "TOOFACHE."

BY SARAH PITT.

"Now, children, see you look after Tommy till mother do come back again. You're not to leave him a minute; he's very poorly to-day."

Mother gave a last anxious glance at Tommy's flushed face, shut the door, and went away up the damp misty street to her long day's washing at the grocer's. Peg and Jack looked at each other in blank dismay.

"Why didn't you tell her we'd got to go and see the soldiers?" demanded Jack most reproachfully.

"What would have been the use? She'd just have said we must stop at home, and Tommy's not that bad, it's only toofache."

"Are you sure?"—and Jack's face began to clear.

"Quite," returned Peg confidently. "I had it myself the other day; you know how red my face looked.

The pair went over to Tommy's cradle and inspected him thoughtfully. A bright merry little fellow he was generally, and Peg and Jack dragged him about the courts and alleys of the neighborhood with tolerable patience, and only an occasional grumble at his presence and weight, but just now they did feel very strongly that he was a decided drag upon their freedom, and greatly wanting in consideration for his elders.

"He needn't have gone and got the toofache to-day," grumbled Jack; "it's like as if he did it on purpose to make a bother."

"Well, we can't help it," sighed Peg; "Polly Stevens could have minded him nicely a bit, but mother said we weren't to leave him a minute."

"But she didn't say we weren't to take him with us," suggested Jack.

"Cause she didn't know we was going," answered Peg.

"Well, she didn't, all the same; and if it's only toofache"—Jack put his head on one side and looked wise—"if it's only toofache, I should think going out would make it well."

That quite settled it. Tommy was promptly hauled out of his cradle and Peg's own hat flattened down over his curly head; that would be sure to keep him warm, and Peg was well used to going without. Tommy raised no objection; his cheeks were red and his eyes shining, and he smiled jalutly at Jack's energetic crows. No doubt to his baby mind Jack was a very brilliant person.

Ten minutes later the three were trudging briskly down the street, on their way to the distant dock where the show was to come off.

A big regiment of soldiers—Highlanders—was going on board one of the great troopships anchored in that dock. Whence the regiment came or whither it was going Peg and Jack neither knew nor cared. Somebody had told them that if they were at the dock about twelve o'clock they would see the troops march on board. That was a sight they had never seen before, and it was the only part that concerned them at present.

"About twelve, that boy said," observed Jack, as they arrived, panting and breathless, at the dock gates, and looked up at the clock-tower. "It's just a quarter to eleven now; it's a good thing we're in time."

They were in time, there could be no question about that. For two long hours they hung about in the chill damp fog, watching eagerly for the first sign of any arrival. Tommy looked about him with bright, restless eyes for a little while; then he began to cry pitifully.

Peg's arms ached, and every minute he seemed to get heavier. More than ever did she wish that he was safe at home with the obliging Polly Stevens.

"Perhaps he'll go to sleep presently," Jack suggested, after a long spell of patting and hushing; "he often does after he's been out a bit, and the sun's coming out too; that'll make him feel warmer."

It was not a very warm sun, but it dried up the damp stones a little, and made the dock look more cheerful, and by-and-by Tommy's heavy eyes closed, and the patting was cautiously tapered off. This was beautiful.

With a sigh of satisfaction Jack took another expedition to the big gateway, and there caught the first hopeful sound, the distant beat of a drum and squeak of the bagpipes. He hurried back to Peg.

"Put him down quick, Peg, and come and look," he cried, in great excitement; "they've got the funniest thing to play on. It's like hundreds of pigs squeaking together."

Peg hastily deposited Tommy in a dry corner beside a pile of timber, and tucked the small shawl closer round his shoulders. "I can see him quite well from the gate," she said; "that's not leaving him, and the sleep's sure to do him good."

The dock was a deep square pool with a row of chains and flat posts round it. Peg and Jack climbed on two that commanded the best view, and stared down with wide open eyes, determined to miss nothing that passed their way.

First came the pipers, and they were not persons to be lightly overlooked; from the topmost feather of their ponderous black bonnets to their white gaiters was one bright vision of finery.

Jack wished with all his heart that he could have had one of those wonderful bagpipes to himself just for one half-hour in a quiet corner, to find out what they were made of.

They had plenty of time to admire them, for instead of marching straight on board, and disappearing in the ship, they turned to one side close below his post, and played away faster than ever, while troop number two marched in through the gate.

Number two was not as smart as the pipers by any means; they wore short petticoats certainly, and white jackets, but none of the scarfs and ribbons, and only common little caps instead of towering black muffs.

There was a long procession of them; the tramp of feet sounded like the regular beat of the big steam-hammer in the foundry behind the court at home.

Now and again came long pauses, when the soldiers stood as still as the posts round the dock, till some big man on the deck above shouted out something in a rough sharp voice, and then every man stepped out again instantly.

Peg scanned the rows of small square windows with all her might, to catch some peep of what those who had got inside were doing. No use. Either they were too busy to look out or had not come to that side.

She recognized some court acquaintances in the crowd about the gates, and pointed them out to Jack with great pride. It was not often that they contrived to be in the front row when anything was going on, but for this once their posts were above all criticism.

Sooner or later all good times come to an end; the last soldier had gone up the gangway, the pipers had shouldered their bagpipes and followed after him. The big man had given up shouting orders, and gone down a brass staircase at the end of the ship.

Even the sun had gone down too, and the white mist was creeping back up the river. Peg got down from her post, benumbed and stiff with holding on so long, and crossed over to Jack.

Jack was taking a last lingering look at a port-hole just above his head. If anybody would have lit a lamp inside he could have seen beautifully, but nobody did, and he had to get down reluctantly.

"Isn't it a pity it's all over? I could stop for hours yet."

"So could I, but it's getting dark. Oh, Jack!"—with a sudden burst—"where's Tommy? I'd forgotten all about him."

Peg flew, rather than walked, to the pile of timber. Poor little Tommy! near three hours he had slept or tossed forgotten in his corner. There was no red flush on the baby face now, no brightness in his dull, half-opened eyes.

Peg picked him up with a sobbing cry. "Oh, Tommy, Peg went and forgot all about him; she'll take him home quick now, and make him so warm and comfy."

But Tommy was not to be cheered even by an offer like that. They carried him home between them, Peg trying hard to remember if, in experiences of "toofache," there had been any pass like this. If he would only have cried or been fractious they would not have minded, but it was not at all like Tommy to be so still and silent.

"He doesn't cry, so his toof can't be aching now," said Jack once, trying to make the best of it.

"It can't have been toofache at all," returned Peg, almost in tears. "I've been trying to think, and I know I wasn't a bit like this; if we were only at home; it is a dreadful way yet."

They got there at last. At the end of their own court mother was standing looking up and down the misty street.

"Oh, children! children! where have you been with him all this day?" she cried taking the little fellow out of their tired arms. "Peg, I shall never trust you with him any more."

Never any more; that was little Tommy's last jaunt with his brother and sister. There is no baby to be carried about and crowed for in the court now, nothing to stand in the way when they want to go to the docks but Jack and Peg both feel as if they never want to see another soldier, or hear the sound of the bagpipes again.

WAGTAIL AND THE FROGS.

BY E. KINGSLEY.

THE Frogs were having a holiday—one could tell that by the way they croaked, and leaped, and hip-hip-hurrahed, looking this way and that for any mischief that perhaps might come to hand.

"I could crack the very sky for fun," cried Bully Frog, the merriest, the most prankish, and the leader of them all, as he sat on a river's bank.

"Or poke out the sun, if you'd a poker long enough," cried another.

While a third hoarsely croaked, "Look, there's a nobler game than either: here comes Tommy Wagtail Water-rat, let's go and have a lark with him;" and away they leaped, swooping down upon him like a pack of merry school-boys.

But about Master Tommy Wagtail Water-rat.

He was making demurely along, his school satchel over his shoulder, and lodged up on his back for convenience. He was not over pleased to see the merry crew bearing down on him, knowing them of old; but he could not beat a retreat, and contradict the world's assertion, "Bold as a rat," so he bore bravely on.

"Good morning," said he, looking slyly at them all.

"It's not a good morning; it's a splendid morning," contradicted and affirmed Bully in a breath, planting himself pertly in front of the school-goer, as if throwing down a gauntlet of defiance, contradiction, or what not.

"Well, what's the difference? I said good, you said splendid," answered the other, mildly enough.

"All the difference, because one is right, the other wrong."

"Oh, very well," replied Tom.

"'Tis not very well," contradicted Bully, while all the others tittered, and hemmed Tommy in.

"And where are you off to?" asked Bully, while the water-rat looked this way and that, and wished himself away.

"I am going to school."

"Not you're not; you're going to stay with us, and we'll have a lark."

"What's a lark—a mething to eat?" asked Tommy."

How the frogs grinned as they heard this ask!

"Tell him we're going to teach him to dance the frog's hornpipe," whispered one over Bully's shoulder; and Bully told him.

"I can't dance, and won't," squeaked Tommy.

"That's just why we're going to teach you—come, off with your school-bag;" and Bully plucked off the satchel and tossed it into the nearest puddle.

"Now, the hornpipe."

Well, it was enough to make the very winds laugh to see the grotesque creatures gathered round poor Tommy, trying to make him take the, to him, impossible steps, but quite possible to them, with their lanky limbs.

As the fun went on Tommy's eyes grew somewhat vicious, and once he screamed when they stepped on his tail by accident or otherwise, "I'll bite you!" at which they all croaked and roared.

"Now," cried Bully, who seemed to be the leading spirit of all the mischief, "now he must leap. Now, Tommy one, two, three, and away."

With this, he and another frog took each of them a fore paw of their victim, and dragged him the distance of their flying leap.

Loosing their hold of him suddenly, he went sprawling on the ground, knocking his teeth into his lip, which was too much for a rat of spirit. So Tommy snapped right and left at them, and tried to run away, which made them laugh the more, and chase him here and there.

Ho, ho! it was a very game of hare and hounds they had with him; the air resounded with their croaks and cries. And as they leaped and raced, the spirit of fun and mischief grew and increased within them; and perhaps a worse spirit took possession of them as well, knowing as they did that they were worrying, teasing, and tormenting a weaker creature than themselves—weaker by reason of their numbers, he as a unit among [illegible].

Thus cruelty crept in and [illegible] with their sport, as is often the case with those whom they were imitating.

Ah! their blood was up, their froggish pulses throbbing; a frog in a heat is a dangerous creature, and here they were in numbers, one poor little water-rat at their mercy.

"Have pity—you can't know what you are doing; you're worrying the life out of me—the very life!" so he panted, at this they all cut a somersault in the air, and laughed in high glee.

"Now the leap, the long leap for him," they cried, as in chorus. They had dragged him to the edge of a steep precipice—deep for Tommy to leap, though only a river's bank, where the river sang and gurgled below.

Bully gave him a shove, just to inspire him with courage he said; but it sent him hurtling over—he was in the water.

"Now, Tommy, swim for your life, or die nobly."

No, a dizziness seized the poor animal—where was he?—where his tormentors? They, his tormentors, were gone to look for stones to keep him down, as many a school-boy has done before and since to hapless frogs, their brethren.

On, on they came to the floundering creature, some rolling their stones on before them, others with their stones clutched high in their fore claws.

Bully was the first to hurl his down below. He missed his aim; but what was that?

The dizziness had passed from Tommy's head, and the cowardice from his heart.

Bold as a rat he would be to speak his reproof, and warning to those grinning frogs ere he died.

"Frogs, be warned!" he cried—he had raised himself from the water, his fore leg held up like an orator's arm, his fore claw trembling as with suppressed eloquence, his voice solemn and grand; "there is such a thing as tit for tat—retribution, as the wise would say—be sure your cruelty will find you out. Look back into the annals of frog land, frog dames, what are [illegible] of your truest kin, whom your very [illegible] in my youth, and down [illegible] years. 'What is sport to you is death to us.' And you, you can deal this with one [illegible] you!"

The sun shone, the wind sighed, the heavens looked down intensely blue and expectant, as the strange words fell.

"Will we have you take my ancestor's words on your lips?" cried Bully, cut to the quick, and he hurled a second stone at the rat.

But he tottered over himself and how it happened I never [illegible] was not [illegible] he received his own hurt, as the retribution I may have spoken of [illegible] he floated a [illegible] upon the water, his paddling legs forgetting their cunning to bear him up. Must he die in the presence of his friends?

"To the rescue, Tommy Wagtail," cried Mrs. Trout, lifting her head from the water, her sweet fishy face full of gentle alarm. "Good for evil is the noblest deed on earth—or in heaven."

All the minnows joined in singing that one word "heaven" like a chorus, their funny throats quivering and repeating it till the waters took it up and tossed it skyward, as if worthy to travel in space.

Meanwhile, Tommy grappled with senseless Bully; it was no easy thing for a rat to save a big, bulky frog, which had no notion of saving itself; but Tommy managed to seize him by the back of his neck, and toss him upon his back, Mrs. Trout helping him with a gentle shove.

Once there, he coiled the creature's fore legs round his neck, held his paws in his mouth, and bravely struck out for land. The trout and the minnows watched him with panting breath, their heads high up in an element not theirs to breathe—ah, noble Tommy Wagtail, though only a water-rat!

Meanwhile, not a frog among Bully's friends dared leap down to lend a claw in his saving, but they hopped away to where the bank sloped down to the water, to help to bear in poor fainting Tommy and his burden, who was fast reviving, and cutting all sorts of antics on Tommy's back, held so tightly in the clutches of his enemy as he supposed him to be.

"Keep still, will you? or you'll swamp us both," cried brave little Tommy between his teeth, while those youngsters of frogs on the shore croaked and hurrahed so wildly, that even Tommy himself wondered whether it would be peace or war on his landing.

Landing—the swell of the river was bearing him out into mid-stream—what would become of them both?

Hal there were Mrs. Trout and all the minnows swimming down to their aid.

"Ah! a lady's hand must perfect the deed," cried she, and how it was done Tommy never knew, but she and the minnows striking the water with their fins, the current turned, and bore him in—he and Bully; the waiting frogs waded in and clutched them. They bore them in; Mrs. Trout and the minnows fell back and retired, their fins keeping stroke to the ditty the frogs chanted, as they landed with the two rescued ones—

"He's a jolly, a jolly good rat,
He's wise as well, be sure of that,
He's taught us a lesson we'll never forget,
We can't repeat it, because we're so wet."

CLEVER WIVES.—It has been said, and very truly, that the test of a man's regard for a woman is his willingness to give her his time, his society. Money he may bestow from lavishness or a sense of duty; seemly attentions he may bestow from courtly habits of attention; but when a man deliberately cultivates his wife's society then all is right between them. It may be that there is much nonsense talked about women being educated to be the companions of their husbands. Men do not want argument and clever discussion in their home lives; their combativeness is sufficiently exercised in the world's more public arena. What they do want is goodness to which they can look up; sufficient culture to make the eye bright, and thought swift; a "mother wit," that is not sometimes crushed and withered by over-much book-learning, but which, allowed fair play, often develops in mature years to true wisdom, and warm affections, that out of their great storehouse can generally furnish excuses for a man's petulance and caprice—affections which show the beauty of constancy by bright example, and lead women to yield without murmuring, on frequent occasions, when one or the other must bend.

ENGLISH AS SPOKEN.—Talbot is pronounced Tolbut.
Thames is pronounced Tems.
Bulwer is pronounced Buller.
Cowper is pronounced Cooper.
Holburn is pronounced Hobun.
Wemyss is pronounced Weems.
Knollys is pronounced Knowles.
Cockburn is pronounced Coburn.
Brougham is pronounced Broom.
Norwich is pronounced Norridge.
St. Leger is pronounced Sillinger.
Hawarden is pronounced Harden.
Colquhoun is pronounced Cohoon.
Cholmondeley is pronounced Chumley.
Beauchamp is pronounced Beecham.
Marjoribanks is pronounced Marshman.
Abergavenny is pronounced Abergenny.
Mainwaring is pronounced Manwaring.
Bolingbroke is pronounced Bullingbrook.
Cholmondeley is pronounced Chumley.

A New England paper thinks that by "proper attention to the feeding of hens, a new and distinctive flavor can be imparted to the eggs of different breeds." Come off, thou thick-headed hayseeder, come clear away off. Don't you know you not that the simplest egg, if left to itself and the ways of nature, will in time evolve from its own inner consciousness a distinctive flavor that will wrinkle the nose of a cast iron statue? What we want is less flavor and more egg.

Two drummers were disputing as to which of their firms had the more extensive business. "Our travellers," said one, "have so much to do that they are away for nearly the whole year." "Nonsense," answered the other, "that is nothing. Ours sometimes never come back at all."

Never did any soul do good but it came readier to do the same again with more enjoyment.

THE PROPER TIME.

BY M. C. GILLINGTON.

Violets in the hazel copse,
  Bluebells in the dingle;
Birds in all the green tree-tops
  Joyous songs commingle.
Phillis through the flowery ways
  Strays from dawn till gloaming.
Oh, the happy breezy days!
  Spring's the time for roaming.

In the budding of the year,
  In the dabbled meadows,
Where the brooklet ripples clear,
  Through the willow shadows,
Corydon, among his sheep,
  Sees fair Phillis roving,
Feels a rapture new and deep—
  Spring's the time for loving!

Merry moments swiftly pass,
  Corydon and Phillis
Wand'ring through the dewy grass,
  Through the daffodillies.
In the woodlands faint and far
  Tender doves are cooing;
Flocks and fields forsaken are—
  Spring's the time for wooing!

Amber cowslips fresh and sweet,
  As a first love-token,
Corydon at Phillis' feet
  Lays—no word is spoken.
Oh, you brooklet! dance along,
  Whirling, dimpling, spinning;
Babble out your sunshine song—
  Spring's the time for winning!

CONCERNING THE SHOE.

The word "shoe" occurs thirty-one times in the English version of the Bible. "A man plucked off his shoe and gave it to his neighbor; and this was a testimony in Israel." "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe." These passages evidently refer to an established symbolical use of the shoe in transferring or taking possession of property. "Loosening the latchets" of shoes and "bearing the shoes" are alluded to as marks of inferiority.

In the East the shoes are removed as a mark of respect. God said to Moses from the burning bush, "Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." To-day an Oriental takes off his shoes when entering his church but keeps on his headgear.

The Hebrews took great interest in the ornamentation of their shoes. Solomon exclaims, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter!" Elaborately worked sandals are still much affected in the East.

An old writer maintains that God, when giving Adam skins of beasts for clothing, gave him shoes of the same matter. Pliny says that Tychius, of Boeotia, was the first who made shoes. Xenophon tells us that the ten thousand Greeks who were with him in the great retreat were compelled "for the want of shoes," to cover their feet with skins, which caused them great inconvenience.

The oldest form of shoe is the sandal, which is nothing but a sole. The Egyptian priests wore sandals of palm leaves and papyrus, while those of the common people were made of leather. The papyrus shoe was interwoven like a mat.

Egyptian shoemakers would appear to have occupied the same uncomfortable and unwholesome positions in their work as our modern operators.

The Hebrew shoe was similar to that of the Egyptians, the military sandal being made of brass or iron.

Homer generally speaks of his heroes as barefooted, but the use of sandals was general among the ancient Greek and Roman women, and gradually became fashionable for men also.

The Greek *crepida* consisted of a thick sole, welted on to a piece of leather, which had in it a number of eyes, through which a thong was passed to bind it to the foot, or sometimes loops merely were welted on to the sole and passed over the foot.

The Romans had shoes of various kinds. The *calceus* covered the whole foot, and was made on a last. Senators wore a *calceus* different from that of other citizens, with straps wrapped about the ankle. The soldier's shoe was very strong, and its sole was studded with nails. The Roman patricians wore an ivory cresent on their shoes. Heliogabalus had his shoes covered with white linen, and Caligula ornamented his with precious stones.

The simple sandal was worn by both sexes among the Romans, but usually in the house only, it being considered an affectation to go into the street with them. They thus corresponded somewhat to our slippers. They had also a slipper without any tie, which completely covered the foot, and was worn only by females and performers in comedy, and many other styles of footgear.

Some of the Greek and Roman shoes had soles four inches thick. Such were worn by short ladies in order to appear taller. The streets of Rome in the reign of Domitian were at one time so filled with cobblers' stalls that the Emperor issued an order for their removal.

The early Saxon shoes were shaped on the Roman model; indeed, the only difference between the ancient and modern laced shoe appears to be that the former was laced to the toe, the latter to the instep only.

In the middle ages shoes of an extra length became popular. In the reign of Richard II. the tips of some reached to the knee, to which they were secured by gold and silver chains. The upper parts were frequently cut to imitate church windows. Several bulls were issued against these extravagances, but long toed shoes held their own for nearly 300 years.

The English Parliament at one time regulated by Act, not only the quality of the leather, but the number of stitches to be taken in every shoe. In 1463 Parliament prohibited the making of any shoes "for the unprivileged classes" with points more than two inches long. The top boots so familiar to us in the pictures of the early Puritans, were introduced in the sixteenth century.

Shoe-making, shoe-mending, and shoe-selling are distinct branches of industry in China. Chinese shoes exhibit great variety of shape. Except in the hobnailed shoe, for wet weather, there is little leather used, the materials being principally calico, silk, satin, velvet, and felt. Children's summer shoes are made of fine open rush-work with bright lining. Ladies' shoes are made and mended by their wearers. The Chinese cobbler goes from house to house, and announces his presence with a peculiar rattle.

Wooden shoes are in general use among peasants on the Continent. They are clumsy but comfortable and cheap.

The Malay women generally go barefooted, but they are very skilful in embroidering slippers in gold tinsel, which, like those of the Turks, are worn just over the toes by ladies of the higher classes.

The present form of shoe was adopted early in the seventeenth century, and the buckle was added about sixty years later. The style of shoe has not varied much for many years; the narrow sole, the broad sole, the "box-toe" and the high and low heel being the principal difference between one pair and another.

We are told that St. Ananias, a contemporary of St. Mark, was a shoemaker. St. Crispin and his brother, Crispinian, are the patron saints of shoemakers. They are said to have suffered martyrdom towards the close of the third century. October 25 is St. Crispin's Day. Shoemaking is distinguished among mechanical callings for the number of its followers who have risen to eminence.

Grains of Gold.

Prudent self control is wisdom's root.

Don't attempt to vie with rich neighbors.

To rule one's anger is well; to prevent it is better.

Don't sacrifice comfort or health to appearances.

Discretion in conduct and speech is more than eloquence.

An angry man opens his mouth and shuts up his eyes.

When a man is wrong and won't admit it, he always gets angry.

It is best to be with those in time that we hope to be with in eternity.

Open suspecting of others comes of secretly condemning ourselves.

Curses are like processions: they return to the place whence they came.

He who does not engage in the quarrels of others will have few of his own.

The slander of some people is as great a recommendation as the praise of others.

It requires very little ability to find fault. That is why there are so many critics.

What we believe is right is more often so because it grinds our axe than otherwise.

Sincerity is the indispensable ground of all conscientiousness, and, by consequence, of all heartfelt religion.

Femininities.

It a girl thinks it a small matter to bridle her tongue she is much mistaken.

It is when a schoolgirl puts an "e" to the word love that the spell begins to work.

Moisture is the greatest enemy of the piano and it cannot be too carefully guarded against.

Set a watch over thy mouth, and keep the door of thy lips, for a tale-bearer is worse than a thief.

A Buffalo statistician has figured out that the women of America pay $8,000,000 a year for bustles.

An Oswego woman horsewhipped a young man for kissing her daughter. Beats all how jealous women are.

Never have dark furniture for the kitchen; it shows dust much more than light, and requires double the care.

Ingrain carpets need to be shaken oftener than Brussels, as, from their more open weave, the dust percolates through them.

When children are always in the nursery, you may construe it as a sure sign that the mother does not care much about them.

A young lady says that she has found out a good way to keep her hands smooth and white, and that is to let her mother do all the work.

Inviolable fidelity, good-humor, and complaisancy of temper outlive all the charms of a fine face, and make the decays of it invisible.

Some say the coming woman will have her own bank account. The question is, how long will she be able to keep it from the coming man.

Queen Victoria on her recent journey to Italy showed herself an experienced traveler in wearing large, loose and by no means new shoes.

Warden, showing ladies through prison: "Will you visit Murderers' Row first?" Ladies in chorus: "Oh, no; we want to save that for the very last."

"Oh, aunt," cried little Amy in her nursery the other day, "make Freddy behave himself: every time I hit him on the head with a mallet he bursts out crying."

There are more than 100 women practicing medicine in Chicago, and several of them are well known throughout the country as the authors of standard medical works.

Here is a witty toast attributed to George Francis Train: "In an age like ours this should be a standing toast with all good Union men: 'The ladies—may they be united—to a man.'"

A good book and a good woman are excellent things for those who know how to appreciate their value. There are men, however, who judge of both from the beauty of their covering.

Oskaloosa, Kansas, is now ruled by women, and, it is said, one of their first official acts was to pass an ordinance prohibiting men appearing on the streets after 10 o'clock at night.

A terrible test of woman's fortitude was made at the Washington Convention, when the Chairwoman asked those who were present at the Seneca Falls meeting 40 years ago to stand up.

A Louisville girl has been rendered insane by the use of hair dye, while another member of her sex in Ohio, who ate arsenic to beautify her complexion, scarcely lived long enough to rue her folly.

The Princess of Wales on two recent occasions has given an example in good manners to late comers at concerts. She was late on these occasions and insisted upon standing in the corridor until the overture was finished.

Girls, avoid sudden exclamations of annoyance, surprise and joy—often approaching to female swearing—as "bother!" "gracious!" "how jolly!" Avoid crossing your letters, and making a short, sharp nod with the head do duty as a bow.

Some time ago an old woman who had received a check went, with great glee, to a bank to draw the money. "This check is crossed; we can't pay it over the counter, my good woman." "All right, sir; I'll come round then," was the reply.

Little Winifred was visiting at her aunt's, and the children were very much amused by her funny speeches. "You think you are very smart, don't you?" one of the boys said, teasingly. "Yes, I think I am, but I know better," the truthful little girl answered.

A lady who was very modest and submissive before marriage, was observed by a friend to use her tongue pretty freely after. "There was a time when I almost imagined she had none." "Yes," said her husband, with a sigh, "but it is very long since."

A celebrated beauty is wearing a waist belt which causes the greatest envy amongst her rivals. Silver medallion portraits of her admirers, cut cameo fashion, form the links of the belt—trophies of conquest, which she displays as proudly as an Indian shows his spoil of scalps.

The following lines inform candidates for matrimony which are the best and worst days in the week for marrying:

Monday for health, Tuesday for wealth,
Wednesday the best day of all;
Thursday for crosses, Friday for losses,
Saturday no luck at all.

Most persons would doubtless say that a baby in the cradle would be likely to live longer than a man of 60, but statistics prove indisputably that 500 in every 1000 infants die before the age of 5 years is recorded, while out of 1000 healthy men aged 45 more than 500 of them will be alive in 5—aye, in 10 years, or even a longer time.

Employer: "Ah! h'm! By the way, Mr. Smallwage, you remember I said I would not need your valuable and highly appreciated services after this week?" Secretary: "Yes, sir; you said you had found by advertising that you could get a female secretary just as competent for less wages." "True. I found a young lady so highly recommended that I engaged her, but this morning I received a note from her declining the place." "Yes, I know about it. She and I have formed a trust to lessen the supply of labor and keep up wages." "Eh?" "I have married her."

Masculinities.

When the heart speaks, glory itself is an illusion.

It's much easier to love a woman than to understand her.

The wish—which ages have not yet subdued in man—to have no master save his mood.

A New York oculist says that the greatest enemy to the eyes of young men is the cigarette.

The young man with a slender salary should choose for his bride a young woman of small waste.

Kindness is stowed away in the heart, like rose leaves in a drawer, to sweeten every object around.

Thomas Stevens, the bicyclist, who traveled round the world lately, says that women flirt in all countries.

Why is a married man like an electric light? Because he frequently goes out of a night when he hadn't ought to.

Don't think that your wife has less feeling than your sweetheart. Her relationship to you is only changed, not her nature.

A Persian proverb says: If you enlist in the army, say a prayer; if you go to sea, say two; but if you get married, say three.

Count Zang of Vienna, whose will shows a fortune of $8,000,000, made all his money out of shops for the sale of Vienna bread in Paris.

The hardest thing for a man to do is to own that he has made a mistake in his judgment. It is an impeachment of his weak side—his mind.

When Sheridan first brought out his comedy, "The School for Scandal," Chesterfield, himself a dramatist, being present with his children, checked them whenever they laughed. Sheridan, hearing of this, wrote to Chesterfield that he thought it mean in him not to let the children laugh, because he (Sheridan) was present at his (Chesterfield) tragedy a few nights before, and laughed at it all the way through.

Some people have queer superstitions. In New York recently a man got out of an elevated railroad car because a canary bird began singing on the train.

Every man rejoices twice when he has a partner of his joy: a friend shares our sorrow and makes it but a moiety, but seals our joy and makes it double.

No preacher is listened to but Time, which gives us the same train and turn of thought that elder people have tried in vain to put into our heads before.

A young man advertises for a place as salesman, and says he has had a good deal of experience, having been discharged from seven different warehouses within a year.

Never let man imagine that he can pursue a good end by evil means without sinning against his own soul! Any other issue is doubtful; the evil effect on himself is certain.

Guest: "Have you a fire escape in this house?" Landlord: "Two of 'em, sir." Guest: "I thought so. The fire all escaped from my room last night, and I came near freezing."

A wise and good man will turn examples of all sorts to his own advantage. The good he will make his patterns, and strive to equal or excel them. The bad he will by all means avoid.

After all a marriage life of 54 years, an old couple near Hickman, Kentucky, have separated because of incompatibility of temper. Husband and wife are each over 70 years old.

Although the Devil be the father of lies, he seems, like other great inventors, to have lost much of his reputation by the continual improvements that have been made upon him.

"Ma," said Bobby, thoughtfully, "I wish I had a brother or two." "Why, Bobby?" "To divide up the spanking. It's tough on a boy to be the only one in the family that gets spanked."

Garrick showed Dr. Johnson his fine house, gardens, statues, pictures, etc., at Hampton Court. "Ah! David, David," said the doctor, "these are the things which make a deathbed terrible!"

It has been discovered that there was a Volunteer Fire Department in a province in Asia Minor 1800 years ago. Pliny complained to Trajan about the rowdyism. After all, times don't change a great deal.

The Wichita man who had to be sued by his wash woman for 50 cents, and the Wellington man who gave a dollar to a newsboy who found and returned to him a pocket-book containing $15,000, have agreed to flip coppers for the belt.

"My dear old friend, how were you able to acquire such an immense fortune?" "By a very simple method." "What method is that?" "When I was poor I made out that I was rich, and when I was rich I made out that I was poor."

Mrs. Kass—"You seem greatly changed and improved since your return from Europe, Mr. Thomson." Mr. Thomson—"Oh, vastly, I assure you. Why, I'm a different man altogether." Mrs. Kass—"Indeed! How pleasant that must be for Mrs. Thomson."

Shortly before leaving San Remo the new Emperor of Germany—received from the Sultan a collar, consisting of nine hazlenuts bearing inscriptions from the Koran—over which the dervishes and sheikhs of the palace had prayed, and which the Padisha requested the august patient to wear round his neck, as by its efficacy he would be cured as by magic.

"All the money you ever handled couldn't buy that little piece of paper." With that he handed me a manifold soiled scrap on which I could at first see nothing. At length I deciphered in rude, disjointed letters, the two words, "Dear Papa." He had discovered it in the play house of his little daughter, who died only a few days ago. Some time when in the midst of her play, her little heart had turned toward him, she had scrawled these two words; and then, having borne testimony of her love, threw the paper away."

Recent Book Issues.

"An Original Belle," by E. P. Roe, is the first number of Dodd, Mead & Co.'s "Library of Fiction." The story is laid during war times, and includes vivid descriptions of the Draft Riots in New York, and the Battle of Gettysburg. There is much, however, in it that will be objectionable to many, and we think it altogether the least readable or enjoyable of this generally excellent author's productions. Price 25 cents.

"Ticknor's Paper Series" still seems to stand well in public favor, and its pretty olive-and-red covers will be seen everywhere during the coming summer. The volume for April is "Len Gansett," a strong Southwestern story, by Opie P. Read, and this will be followed by Clara Louise Burnham's "Next Door," and Mr. Howell's "The Minister's Charge." The story of "Len Gansett" is a peculiarly interesting and valuable one, with an excellent plot, and dealing with a region and type of humanity as yet unexplored by literary artists, and full of quaint attractiveness. Price 50 cents.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The *Magazine of Art* for May is interesting from the opening article to the art notes closing the number. The frontispiece is a fine etching, "The Master Brewer of the Monastery." A paper on "The Barbizon School" painters, by David Croal Thompson, opens the number. Jean Baptiste Camille Corot, is the special subject of the article. Half a dozen or more illustrations from Corot's paintings and sketches illustrate it. There is an outspoken paper on "Crazes in Art," by W. P. Frith. The crazes that Mr. Frith takes occasion to criticise are Pre-Raphaelitism and impressionism. An exceptionally interesting paper is "A Personal View of Japanese Art," written and illustrated by Mortimer Menpes, an English artist. Two papers are devoted to "Irish Lace." "Old Masters of Sculpture at the Royal Academy," and other interesting papers, together with an ample supply of notes, close the number. Cassell & Co., publishers, New York.

LETTERS AND ENVELOPES.—In an interesting article upon this subject, a French writer describes all the methods of sealing that have been successively employed from the remotest antiquity. The first seal consisted of a ring that was affixed to clay or bole, and later to chalk or a mixture of pitch, wax, and plaster. The use of wax did not begin to become general till the Middle Ages.

Beeswax, rendered yellow by time, was the first material used. Then came sealing wax mixed with a white substance. Red wax began with Louis VI., in 1113, and green wax made its appearance about the year 1163. In the thirteenth century, yellow, brown, rose, black, and blue were added to the foregoing colors. Black wax is a rarity met with in the seals of the military religious orders.

Among the ancients ring-seals were used not only for sealing letters, but also, as small locks were not common, for sealing caskets and chests that contained valuable objects; and they were even employed for sealing the doors of houses and apartments.

Under the first empire people began to use wafers, which were brought from Italy by the soldiers and officers of the French army. The wafers were cut with a punch out of a thin leaf made of flour. Finally gummed envelopes gradually began to replace sealing wax and wafers nearly everywhere. The first envelopes which were manufactured in England date back to 1840.

THE COST OF STOPPING A TRAIN.—Another chapter, though a short one, is given by an engineer on the Central road on the cost of stopping a railroad train. He says that "there is required about twice as much power to stop a train as to start one, the loss of power depending upon the momentum. A train going at the rate of 60 miles an hour can, by means of the Westinghouse air-brake, be stopped within 120 yards from the first application of the brake. Now enough power is lost to carry this same train 15 miles over a plane surface. First, there is the momentum acquired by the train flying at this remarkable speed, then the loss of steam in applying the brakes, and lastly, but not least, the extra amount of coal to compensate for all these losses. By computation I have ascertained that every complete stop involves a cost of $1.17."

A SMALL BOY is rather slow in committing prayers to memory, and requires a good deal of prompting. The other night a certain one of them began his regular prayer in his regular way. "Now I lay me"—and there stuck fast. "Down," said his mother, prompting. Whereupon he set off again with great fluency and alacrity—"Down came a blackbird and nipped off her nose."

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GOOD MANNERS.

Good manners are not so common as to be of no weight in society, like good spelling or language. One may be rich as the Rothschilds, one may be highly educated, and not possess them, or one may have them in a degree.

The Duc de Morny's definition of a polite man was, "one who listens with interest to things he knows all about, when they are told by a person who knows nothing about them;" but this is but one phase of his character. Good manners are more serviceable than a passport, than a book account, or a lineage.

They make friends for us; they are more potent than eloquence and genius without them. They undoubtedly spring from a kind heart, and are the dictates of good humor. They are not something to be learned from fashion news and books of etiquette; they are not imported or borrowed. The good-mannered person does not tell us our failings, does not lecture us; he does not merely wear his manners because they are becoming or polite, but because he can no more exist without them than without air.

They resemble the antique painted glass, in which the colors were not laid on, but stained through; they are a part of his character; they are as much a gift as poetry is to another, or the inventive faculty. There are those who may be said to have a positive genius for them, as another has for conversation; they know how to sway others by them.

Polite people have an influence that is not due to their position or possessions, to their learning or their wit. There are those who believe that good manners are only another name for good clothes and good food and good homes with the modern conveniences and luxuries, that they are talkative and emphatic and showy; but we do not always find that the best-mannered people live in palaces.

Good manners are something which nobody can afford to do without, no matter how rich or powerful or intellectual he may be. They add to beauty, they detract from personal ugliness, they cast a glamor over defects, they ameliorate the round shoulders of this person and the squint of the other.

Where they exist, imagination supplies deficiencies of every other attraction. They are contagious, like the measles, but they must be more than skin deep to be of any service.

THREE VIRTUES.—We cannot observe the necessary rules of life if there be wanting these three virtues: Wisdom, which makes us discern good from evil; universal love, which makes us love all men who are virtuous; and that resolution which makes us constantly persevere in the adherence to good, and in the aversion to evil. But lest some fearful persons, not well versed in morality, should imagine that it is impossible for them to acquire these three virtues, they should know that there is no person incapable of acquiring them; that the impotence of man is voluntary. However dull and inexperienced a man may be, if he desire to learn, and grow not weary in the study of virtue, he is not very far from wisdom.

SHE had been rhapsodizing about Browning for nearly an hour to young Mr. Waldo, and as she sat there in the flickering firelight, shading her eyes with one shapely hand, he thought he had never seen a fairer picture. She was about to go on, when her little brother, opened the door. "Penelope," he said, "can't I have some of them cold beans you put away to eat after Mr. Waldo goes home?"

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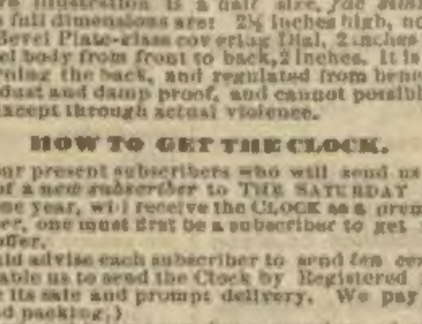

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☞ Observe the following symptoms resulting from Diseases of the Digestive Organs:

Constipation, inward piles, fulness of the blood in the head, acidity of the stomach, nausea, heartburn, disgust of food, fulness or weight in the stomach, sour eructations, sinking or fluttering in the pit of the stomach, swimming of the head, hurried or difficult breathing, fluttering at the heart, choking or suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, dots or webs before the sight, fever or dull pain in the head, deficiency of perspiration, yellowness of the skin and eyes, pain in the side, breast, limbs and sudden flushes of heat, burning of the flesh.

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LEAP-YEAR LOVERS.

As far into the past, I ween,
As ancient history can carry,
Th' unwritten law has always been—
The man should ask the maid to marry.

But—tho' the innovation 's great
That dares disturb so old a plan—
I would suggest in 'eighty-eight,
The maid should supplicate the man.

Then, oh, what fun our loves would be!
When girls would kiss us, clasp our waist;
Or madly crave, on bended knee,
The happy wedding-day to haste?

I'd like to lean on Jessie's arm,
While she would press me to her bosom;
Oh, love, I'm sure, would lose no charm
If men were coy, and maids wo'd choose 'em!

—U. N. Nonk.

Operators in wool—Moths.

Lost at sea—The sight of land.

Easy way to kill time—Eat dates.

On his metal—A newly shod horse.

A spring garment—The wire bustle.

A strange sight—To see a garden walk.

A striking expression—"Hit him again.

A lot with which everybody is content—A lot of money.

The wasp has one strong point, but it is not in his favor.

When is a man not a man?—When he turns into a lane.

The first law of gravity—Never laugh at your own jokes.

What tradesman is the easiest to be taken in?—A green-grocer.

Jinks has been out the night before, and is late at his desk. Employer, sternly: "Well?" Jinks: "Not very, sir."

The people of this country are not in need of any new language. Many of them cannot speak the one they have.

At a country inn. Guest: "I say, landlord, your food is worse than it was last year." Landlord: "Impossible, sir."

A little girl, on being told that an older sister was only a half sister, mournfully asked: "When will she be my whole sister?"

It is said that a lawyer can lay down the law, but that it is the only thing he once gets hold of that he is ever willing to lay down.

Young physician, pompously: "Yes, I've called at Mr. Brown's 3 times a day for a week. He is a sick man, Miss Jones." Miss J.: "He must be by this time."

"Why, Charley, you seem to have a good appetite this morning. Been taking any exercise?" Charley. "Yas, deah boy, twied on fowah new coats this mawning."

Woman, who has given something to eat to a tramp: "You have a very awkward way of eating, man." Tramp: "Yes, ma'am; I guess it's cause I'm out of practice."

Force of habit. Old lady, to railroad brakeman: "How soon does this train start for Shacknack?" Brakeman: "Not for 2 hours yet, madam. Step lively, please."

"Will you allow me to sleep in the 10-acre lot back of the barn, ma'am?" pleaded the tramp. "Certainly," responded the woman, kindly; "and here are a couple of matches, in case it should turn cold before morning."

"Will you please signal to me in the gallery when Mr. —— begins to speak?" asked a constituent of a member. "Certainly, sir, certainly," replied the Senator. "Well, what shall the signal be?" asked the constituent. "I'll leave," answered the Senator.

There is a story told of an Irishman who, when he saw a pair of snuffers for the first time, examined them with much interest. Then he took of a loaded wick with his fingers, dropped it into the snuffer-box and exclaimed: "Be jabers! it's a right convenient invintion, so it is."

Jessie's teacher gave her nupils a party, to which "little brother" was invited. He ate heartily of ice cream and cake, and was found reposing on the bench in the porch while the other children were at play in the yard. When asked why he didn't join them, he exclaimed: "Oh, I can't play; my pants choke me so!"

An Honorable Record.

J. H. Bates' well known and highly successful Advertising Agency, formerly at 41 Park Row, New York, removes on the 1st of May, into spacious and commodious premises in the magnificent fireproof Potter Building, 38 Park Row, corner of Beekman St. Mr. Bates, first engaged in business as an Advertising Agent in 1863, afterwards establishing the firm of Bates & Locke,—Mr. Locke being the Petroleum V. Nasby, whose death a few weeks since is freshly remembered—and during his 25 years of business, paid the newspapers of the United States and the Dominion of Canada, at the lowest calculation, over 15,000,000 dollars in cash for advertisements sent them. This is a record, coupled as it is with the fairest and most honorable dealing to all, of which he may well be proud.

HUMPHREYS'
HOMEOPATHIC
SPECIFIC No. 28

In use 20 years. The only successful remedy for
Nervous Debility, Vital Weakness,
and Prostration, from over-work or other causes. $1 per vial, or 5 vials and large vial powder, for $5. SOLD BY DRUGGISTS, or sent postpaid on receipt of price.—Humphreys' Medicine Co., 109 Fulton St., N. Y.

PLANTS AND THE AIR.—The general effect of vegetation is to purify the air. The leaves of plants and trees inhale carbonic acid gas—the poisonous element of the atmosphere thrown out by animals in breathing—and give out oxygen, the life-giving element without which animal life cannot exist.

The constant action of the leaves of plants is one of the natural agencies by which the proportion of the carbonic acid in the air is always kept at a minimum.

This element, carbonic acid, without which plant life could not exist, is poisonous to animal life; not, as is usually supposed, because it is in itself a poison, but because when more than a certain proportion of it is in the air respiration becomes impossible. It is not a poison to the stomach or blood, but is deadly to the lungs.

Yet, though it is true that the general influence of vegetation is to render the air pure, it is also true that house plants should never be kept in sleeping rooms—nor, indeed, in any rooms generally occupied—if the matter of ventilation is not carefully attended to.

Every green leaf on tree or plant sucks in during the sunshine carbonic acid from the air, and breathes out oxygen; but this is only in the daytime.

During the night this action ceases, and the reverse process goes on—that is, taking in oxygen and giving out carbonic acid. But the young shoots and flowers of all plants breathe in oxygen only; and, consequently, they may actually vitiate the air, just as animals do, by increasing its proportions of carbonic acid.

From this, we see that the harm done by plants in houses is caused especially when they are blossoming, and also at night. Of course, as the processes of blooming and germination are largely carried on by all plants during the day, both forms of action—the inhalation and the exhalation of carbonic acid—must go on also in the daylight; but in the day the inhalation action of the leaves so very much exceeds the reverse process of the blossoms and young shoots that the latter becomes comparatively of no importance.

A ROMANTIC STORY.—The great strike on one of the Western roads reminds me of a romance, says a writer in a Chicago paper. In one of the towns on the main line lives a man who for years has been in the employ of the corporation which is now having trouble. From apprentice boy in the workshop he worked his way up until he became an engineer.

One night he was called up and sent out on an extra. He had not gone far on his run when something danced before the glare of his headlight, and as quickly did he reverse the engine. Leaving the pilot he walked down the track and found a child neatly wrapped and wide awake. He took it back to the pilot, made a cot for it and proceeded on his run.

On his return home the waif of the road was taken to his home, adopted, reared and educated. She became one of the beauties of the little town and grew into womanhood. The engineer, although nearly 35 years older than the pretty-faced creature, loved her, and they were married.

The other day, when there were rumors of a strike, the old engineer appealed to his child-wife for advice, and she begged him to remain with the company, and not desert the road on which he found her and from which he had rescued her. He consented, and there is now one of the old engineers who is true to the throttle.

A HOUSE in Tolono, Ill., which had the reputation of being haunted, because uncanny sounds were heard in it, and was, therefore, frequently for rent, was finally tenanted by its owner, who resolved to "take the bull by the horns" and solve the mystery. After a careful investigation one night he discovered that some mischievous persons stationed in an unused parsonage opposite had attached a brickbat to one end of a string which was dropped through a hole in the porch roof of the "haunted" house, so that when the "ghosts" pulled the other end of the line the brick would rise and fall, striking the porch ceiling. The angry owner besieged the parsonage with revolver in hand, but the fugitives escaped from the building.

A HARTFORD lady remitted to a large New York house to pay a bill and by mistake sent one cent less than the face of the bill. The New York house wrote (cost two cents) asking for the missing cent, and on receiving it sent on a new receipt (cost two cents more) and, of course, it cost the debtor two cents to forward the one, making in all six cents expended in paying one cent. Business is business.

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WANAMAKER'S.

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL 16, 1888.

Merrily as a mill stream prices flow between the banks of Dress Stuffs.

SUMMER CLOTHS IN VARIETY, PLAIN, CHECKED and Mixed. White capped Challis, 20 to 60c; Creamy Cashmere, 50c. to $1.25; Albatross and Veiling, 50c. to $1; shimmering Mohair, 50; and so on to the white fancies for Infants' Outing Cloaks. Then that little world of cottons; Ginghams, 10 to 50c; Sateens, 10 to 37½c; Chintzes, 7 to 12½c; Seersuckers, 5 to 25c; Batiste, 12½c; Crazy Crepe, 12½—every one a trade triumph.

NEW IMPORTATION OF FINE BLACK DRESS GOODS, plain and fancy.

All-wool Crepe de Chine, $1.25 to $4.
Plain twisted Silk Grenadines, $1 to $2.50.
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These at a glance. STAY an hour at their counters; something new with every watch tick.

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EXTERNALLY—for all kinds of injuries; *relieving pain* instantly, and rapidly healing the wounded parts.

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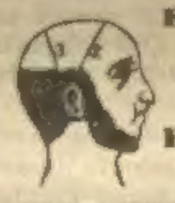

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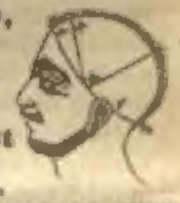

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No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
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No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
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He has always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

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Mrs. N. B. De Sausure, for five years Assistant to the Lady Principal at Vassar College, will open the house No. 171 Joralemon Street, for the benefit of young ladies wishing to attend the sessions of the Packer Collegiate Institute, on or after September 19th, 1887.

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Latest Fashion Phases.

The sping season has introduced a complete series of braided jackets, paletots, and fancy vetements, which excel in richness of design, quality of cloth, beauty of workmanship, and correctness of cut, in a style which distances all competitors. Perhaps there are few styles which are so becoming to the feminine sex as the tight-fitting, neatly braided jacket.

The models now on exhibition are made with best of contrasting cloth, braided in self colors; the jacket is usually plain, but in some models the revers are braided. Braided jackets have usually plain waistcoat fronts, where they are not closed *en bias*, or fastened on one side, but the varieties are endless, and one very becoming style is in plain cloth, of superb quality, with braided revers, and plain waistcoat of coachman's cloth.

Many jackets have no other trimming than plain pearl buttons of large size and great beauty. Long vetements in soft reseda colored cloth are richly braided over the fronts, collar, sleeves, and pockets, in a darker or lighter shade of the same color.

Every fashionable shade of cloth can be had in any of these styles. Demisaison paletots are made with colored silk linings, which are effective, and slip on easily over the fashionable velvet and plush corsages. Upon light colored cloth mantles a great deal of flat passementerie is placed, and this recalls the fashionable braid, without being exactly similar, so that those ladies who have braided dresses can have charming *vetements* which are sufficiently distinct to give an air of novelty.

Thousands of cloth jackets and mantles are sold weekly in this department, which is constantly always supplied with the latest styles, and not only of the recherche mantles of the wealthy, but of the simpler series of cheap and useful paletots.

Braiding has invaded every department of dress. Thus we see lovely peignoirs for brides richly braided on the delicate silks and surahs of which they are made. Plush peignoirs have braided plastrons and revers, and vigogne dressing gowns are braided upon fronts, collars, and sleeves in a series of beautifully contrasting tints and shades of color.

Jerseys are, of course, braided in every variety of style, and in the lingerie department we find charming corsages braided on white and colored silks for morning wear.

Bonnets are not only braided to match the tailor-made toilette, but also embroidered on cloth in small but graceful patterns. These chapeaux are models of good taste, the tone of the cloth being relieved by the shading of the braiding.

The toque is the chief form of cloth-braided hats, the border, which this month is of fur, will be changed to a braided band, indeed this style is likely to prevail until warmer rays bring us to the conviction that we may safely discard all traces of passed habilliments.

The large hats are coming to the front; very effective looking they are, and in nearly all cases becoming to their wearers. Many are trimmed with velvet, with an encircling ostrich feather on one side, and the brim much turned up on the other, often with watered silk ribbon straps and loops. Black, dark, amethyst, and the old-fashioned emerald-green are to be popular in velvet.

This particular shade of deep green, which has been laid aside for many years, will be one of the colors in velvet for mid-season bonnets, trimmed with black lace, jet, or delicate gold passementerie. It will also be used for trains and trimmings for handsome gowns. It looks well with tan color.

Delicate gold lace and feathery gold ornaments are much used on black lace bonnets. Real lace veils have been popular this season, and also the imitation, sold by the yard. It has been much the fashion lately, owing to the cold winds, to line the fancy net veils with thin gauze, and wear them only to the tip of the nose.

A few may be seen more thickly lined, giving the idea of a domino. White net veils are well patronized by young girls, and also grey gauze. The colored ones are scarcely ever seen now.

It is difficult to say which are really the more fashionable—plain white or fancy colored pocket-handkerchiefs. Young ladies certainly incline to the latter. There are fancy bordered ones without number, some in delicate shades having the white centre, and the border of cut-out fern leaves, with net introduced, and the whole well embroidered; others in colored cambric, with a powdering of spots and hemstitched borders, or with button-holed scalloped edges.

A grey-blue and a peculiar red, neither brick nor scarlet, are two new shades. Some are in two colors in fine muslin, such as grey and pink, white and blue, etc.; and again others have borders of closely set, narrow colored lines about an inch deep running towards the centre.

Soft colored silk "show" handkerchiefs are popular, and so are the Irish lawn and cambric ones, with hem-stitched borders of from one to three inches deep.

Tea gowns have, many dressmakers affirm, spoilt the sale of dinner gowns, for whereas they make two of the latter, they make twelve of the former. This may be partly prejudice, but certainly tea gowns are popular, and also more costly and smarter than they were.

They are made of the richest brocade and moire, lined throughout with satin, with fronts of either fancy gauze, crepe de Chine, silk, muslin, lace, or satin Merveilleux, and finished off with very beautiful passementerie. Or they can be of cashmere, with Surah fronts and cascades of lace. Some have long hanging sleeves, independent of the close fitting ones, and these may be in lace or silk crepe.

One, worthy of note, recently made, had the gown proper of red and black brocade of beautiful design, with the front and coat sleeves (the latter reaching only just below the elbow) of crimped red Surah, with transparent black lace sleeves, which hung open and loose from the shoulder to the edge of the skirt.

Over the red front fell a length of the most delicate black lace, matching the sleeves, caught up here and there, and finished off at the waist with a long girdle of black and gold beads. The high collar was beaded to correspond.

Black satin or brocade tea gowns, or those composed of wide striped satin and moire, sometimes have the front of black lace, worked all over with small gold or steel beads.

Pale grey faille Francaise, with gold passementerie, and front of white crepe de chine; striped yellow and grey moire and satin, with the front of yellow, veiled with gold-beaded lace, with ribbons of yellow and grey satin, are all fashionable combinations.

Dressing or morning jackets of Surah have one side of the front hanging in the usual way, and the other side gathered up and fastened across the front on to the opposite shoulder, with a fall of white lace hanging to the waist corresponding with the other side of the front.

All the pretty novelties in bijouterie and fancy knicknacks are now being displayed in shop windows. In the former there are several new designs, such as a dog's head, with a parasol in its mouth, all in brilliants, as a brooch; also a few fish in line, bars of gold with three horseshoes strung on, three flies just settled, or the initial letters of a name in the centre, all in diamonds, flanked by a ruby, pearl or sapphire at each end.

The pips of playing cards—the whole four—in colored enamel, with brilliant in centre; a heart with a dove flying through, in diamonds. Gold brooches, about three inches long, are in form of spring flowers, a daisy, buttercup, primrose, &c.

A gold bangle, with the date of marriage engraved upon it, with a tiny key and lock is often now given to a bride on her wedding morn, and when the ceremony is over, the bridegroom locks it on her arm, and puts the key on his watch-chain.

Bridesmaids' brooches are sometimes given in cases, made in the form of a white satin, high-heeled slipper of very small dimensions. Diamond letters, about an inch large, are fashionable as pins and brooches.

Odds and Ends.

MANTEL DRAPERIES.

Take a piece of felt the desired depth and cut in broad, shallow scallops seven inches wide and three deep, and between each cut a block three inches deep and two wide, and have the edges of these pinked in tiny points or half-inch scallops.

Have a loose scroll pattern of blossoms, leaves and twisted tendrils stamped the whole length. Take iridiscent or plain tinsel cord and couch down along the stamped outline.

The couching silk should be as perfect a match for the line of the cord as can be obtained. If one attempts to "run" tinsel cord on to a fabric the needle is soon dulled at its point, and the work not so rapidly executed as by taking a short stitch over the cord on the right side and a half-inch stitch on the back side of the work, neither does it have the graceful look of lying lightly on the felt background that it has in the latter case.

The flowers and leaves are improved by giving them a heavier look than the tendrils by applying a second cord in the same manner as the first and couching it closely alongside the original, so that it shall look like a broader cord or braid.

Veins in the leaves should be outlined with embroidery silk; if faint lines are desired in the flowers petals to give a Kensington effect, they should be daintily executed with fine sewing silk to avoid a "heavy result."

Life should be too full of better things to spend months on such work; this would pass a few hours pleasantly.

A Second Design.—If a pattern of eight inches depth is desired, buy a piece of gilded felt nine inches deep. Buy in the same proportion for any desired pattern; but it is better to have less than more, for a very simple design, like a running pattern of roses and leaves or morning-glory blossoms and leaves, is more artistic than a heavier one in applique work.

Have the felt as long as the background to which it is to be applied; then have it stamped, and cut the design carefully on the exact line with a pair of sharp scissors. It should be very carefully cut out, the edges free from any "nigs" that a careless movement or dull scissors might easily produce.

Baste this carefully and smoothly to any background desired, plush, velvet, or felt of a rich shade upon which gold will be effective, then with heavy embroidery silk couch down the edges in a loose buttonhole stitch.

Unless the room in which it is to be hung is very large and heavily finished and garnished in a very ostentatious manner, it were better to have the edge of the lambrequins self-finished, i. e., its own edge cut in some pretty design. If the surroundings warrant something more elaborate, the fancy stores furnish fringes, tassels, and pendants in abundance and of a variety extensive enough to "suit to a T" each of the "many women of many minds."

But to each of these we would give a little advice. It is better to have too few decorations than too many, or those unsuited to one's condition in life or to the "other things," about the house. Neither burden one's self with too much to "care" for.

A Third Design.—This is very pretty for a bedroom mantel. Buy one length of single width twilled gray flannel; a heavy quality of all-wool should not cost more than seventy-five cents a yard.

Cut one length ten inches deep and shape the edge in scallops by using a teacup for a guide; then recut these edges with a ten-cent piece in the same manner. Cut another strip six inches deep, a third four inches, and finish the edges in the same way, having the large scallops on the six inch strip a size smaller than the first; the large scallops on the four-inch strip a size smaller than the second.

In each of these scallops outline a pattern in silk or split zephyr, in each strip the designs being a trifle lighter in shade and size than the one beneath. Baste the second strip above the embroidery of the lower, and the third above the work of the second.

Have a half inch pine board, covered with plain flannel, turn in the edge of the lambrequin, and tuck around the edge of this "false mantel," with tacks as ornamental as desired. As drapery is but a fashion, one should not injure real mantels by driving nails into them.

Genoa Cake.—Cream ½lb. of butter and mix in by degrees, 8oz. castor sugar, 10oz; flour, ½lb. sultana raisins, 2oz. mixed peel cut small, and five well-beaten eggs. Beat all well together for some minutes; have ready 2oz. of almonds and 1oz. of pistachio nuts blanched and cut up; add them to the other ingredients; and lastly, the grated rind of a lemon and one teaspoonful of baking powder; butter a tin, and line it with buttered paper, the paper to project about one inch above the rim; pour in the mixture bake at once in a cool oven for one and a half hours; sprinkle a few cut up almonds on top of the cake.

"John," said the farmer's wife "afore we start for home I think I'd ought to have that tooth pulled out. It's ached the whole day."

"I know, Mariar," replied John dubiously, "but by the time we get that jug filled an' the plug terbacker we haint got much money to spend on luxuries."

"You want to buy a stove? Certainly mum. What kind of a stove?" "Well, we're just married and think of going to housekeeping, and as I don't know how to cook, I think I will take a cooking-stove."

One word beforehand is better than ten afterwards.

Confidential Correspondents.

HETTIE.—Steep the shells in strong soda, and then wash carefully in acetic or diluted sulphuric acid.

TALENT.—The cardinal virtues are justice, temperance and fortitude, on which all the other virtues depend.

ESPEY.—A "bill of entry" is a document containing an account of goods entered at a custom-house either inward or outward.

ETCETERA.—The "given name" is the Christian name, or name that is given to a person to distinguish it from the "surname," which is not given but inherited.

STUFFER.—Any person wishing to learn the mystery of the art of stuffing birds can do so by taking lessons from a taxidermist. It is not at all unusual for the members of this calling to give lessons.

A. M. K.—It is not often that a baby is born with a tooth, but such freaks of nature have occurred. Read "King Richard III.," and you will find that a very hideous superstition is connected with the phenomenon which you describe.

G. J. W.—The belly of your violin being covered with resin will in no way injure the instrument, and, as a rule, violinists let it remain. The only way to remove it would be to scrape it away very carefully. You cannot possibly damage the violin as long as you do not remove its outer varnish.

JOHN D.—Stammering is not always a habit, as there are some people in whom it occurs as a consequence of physical defect. But in the majority of cases stammering is a nervous affection, and can be cured by the exercise of severe self-control. Medical treatment, if by that drugs are indicated, is of comparatively little use.

HOUSLEY.—The exclamation, "Oh, how full of briars is this working-day world!" occurs in "As You Like It, Act I, Scene 3." The remark is addressed by Rosalind to Celia, and the latter replies, "They are but burrs, cousins, thrown upon thee in holiday foolery; if we walk not in the trodden paths, our very petticoats will catch them."

JAKE.—We have heard the following story given as the origin of "Catching a Tartar." It was during some war with Tartary that an Irishman, having made a capture, called out to his colonel, "I've caught a Tartar, your honor." "Bring him along," was the colonel's reply. "But he won't come, sir." "Well, come along yourself." "But he won't let me!" Pat's prisoner had proved a match for him, hence the proverb.

POSTHOLE.—A calendar month is a solar month, as set down in the almanacs. By the calendar arrangement the month of February has twenty-eight days, except in leap year, when it has twenty-nine; April, June, September, and November have thirty days each, and all the other months have thirty-one days respectively. A lunar month is the period of one revolution of the moon, which, in a rough way, may be said to be four weeks.

TROUBLED.—There is no need for you to distress yourself. The man was rude, and inclined to trifle with your feelings; but you are quite able to take care of yourself, and the lesson you gave him will serve him in good stead. Do not allude to the matter again—that is the best worldly advice. We do not defend your admirer's conduct; but, after all, the rudeness was merely trifling, and in your own interest you would do well not to mention it to any third person.

DESPO.—If you fairly fling yourself at a flighty, spirited girl, what can you expect? Do not go maundering about, but let her see that you are a man. She means to marry you; and we promise that, if your present abject and sentimental proceedings are continued, you will have such a life as will make you wish you had never been born. You tempt a young humorist to domineer over you, and then you are mightily surprised when she promptly treats you as her humble servant. The best and truest of girls cannot always resist the chance of showing a trifling caprice; and no good judge of feminine human nature thinks much of that.

WEARY.—You cannot help the man's fickleness, and you must bear with the trouble which sentimentalism has brought upon you. In no way are you to blame, so you may ease your mind on that score; the only wrong-doer is the gentleman who transferred his affections so suddenly to you. He blundered into an engagement, and then tried to blunder out of it. You are a good girl, and you did not foresee that he would proceed to fall in love with you; he has forced his declaration on you, and you can only say, "Your word is given. If you deceive and jilt a lady whom I own to be my superior, how can I hope that you will be faithful to me?" The situation is a difficult one, but you can extricate yourself with honor.

REX.—Thorough bass is the art by which harmony is superadded to any proposed bass, and includes the fundamental rules of composition. This branch of musical science is twofold—theoretical and practical. Theoretical thorough bass comprehends the knowledge of the connection and disposition of all the several chords—harmonious and dissonant—and includes all the established laws by which they are formed and regulated. Practical thorough bass is conversant with the manner of taking the several chords on an instrument, as prescribed by the figures placed over or under the bass part of a composition, and supposes a familiar acquaintance with the powers of these figures, a facility in taking the chords they indicate, and judgment in the various applications and effects of those chords in accompaniment.

PHRENITIS.—We do not think that you will do any good by dramatic literature. At present you are not strong enough to write at all, for your mind seems to be wavering and turgid and undecided; but, even if you were a strong writer, you could hardly hope to succeed in influencing the world as you desire. Generous young fellows often set out with the intention of causing a social or moral revolution, but they soon learn wisdom when they find how very hard it is to move the mocking solidities of the world. You are leading an innocent, praiseworthy life, and we advise you to be content, for we detect no trace of literary ability in your writings. As for the hereditary insanity, pray do not think of it! You are a high-strung, sensitive, imaginative being, with little strength and no sense of humor, but you do not show one of the symptoms which long experience has taught us to associate with brain-trouble.